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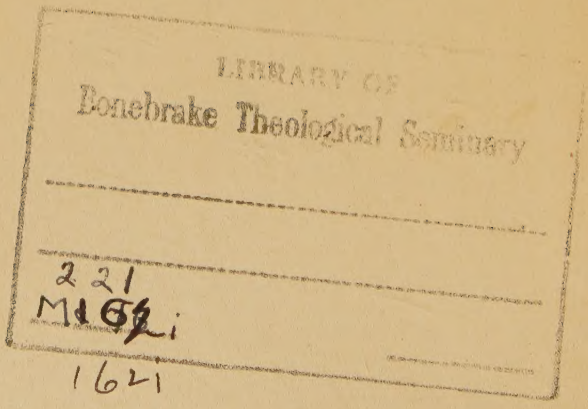

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Arthur P. Peden

—REV. ARTHUR P. PEDEN.—

INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

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By

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To
My Pupils
Past and Present

PREFACE

THIS *Introduction* does not pretend to offer anything to specialists. It is written for theological students, ministers, and laymen, who desire to understand the modern attitude to the Old Testament as a whole, but who either do not have the time or the inclination to follow the details on which all thorough study of it must ultimately rest. These details are intricate, often perplexing, and all but innumerable, and the student is in danger of failing to see the wood for the trees. This *Introduction*, therefore, concentrates attention only on the more salient features of the discussion. No attempt has been made, for example, to relegate every verse in the Pentateuch [1] to its documentary source; but the

[1] Pentateuch and Hexateuch are used in this volume to indicate the first five and the first six books of the Old Testament respectively, without reference to any critical theory. As the first five books form a natural division by themselves, and as their literary sources are continued not only into Joshua, but probably beyond it, it is as legitimate to speak of the Pentateuch as of the Hexateuch.

method of attacking the Pentateuchal problem has been presented, and the larger documentary divisions indicated.

It is obvious, therefore, that the discussions can in no case be exhaustive; such treatment can only be expected in commentaries to the individual books. While carefully considering all the more important alternatives, I have usually contented myself with presenting the conclusion which seemed to me most probable; and I have thought it better to discuss each case on its merits, without referring expressly and continually to the opinions of English and foreign scholars.

In order to bring the discussion within the range of those who have no special linguistic equipment, I have hardly ever cited Greek or Hebrew words, and never in the original alphabets. For a similar reason, the verses are numbered, not as in the Hebrew, but as in the English Bible. I have sought to make the discussion read continuously, without distracting the attention—excepting very occasionally—by foot-notes or other devices.

Above all things, I have tried to be interesting. Critical discussions are too apt to divert those who

pursue them from the absorbing human interest of the Old Testament. Its writers were men of like hopes and fears and passions with ourselves, and not the least important task of a sympathetic scholarship is to recover that humanity which speaks to us in so many portions and so many ways from the pages of the Old Testament. While we must never allow ourselves to forget that the Old Testament is a voice from the ancient and the Semitic world, not a few parts of it—books, for example, like Job and Ecclesiastes—are as modern as the book that was written yesterday.

But, first and last, the Old Testament is a religious book; and an *Introduction* to it should, in my opinion, introduce us not only to its literary problems, but to its religious content. I have therefore usually attempted—briefly, and not in any homiletic spirit—to indicate the religious value and significance of its several books.

There may be readers who would here and there have desiderated a more confident tone, but I have deliberately refrained from going further than the facts seemed to warrant. The cause of truth is not served by unwarranted assertions; and the facts

are often so difficult to concatenate that dogmatism becomes an impertinence. Those who know the ground best walk the most warily. But if the old confidence has been lost, a new confidence has been won. Traditional opinions on questions of date and authorship may have been shaken or overturned, but other and greater things abide ; and not the least precious is that confidence, which can now justify itself at the bar of the most rigorous scientific investigation, that, in a sense altogether unique, the religion of Israel is touched by the finger of God.

JOHN E. McFADYEN.

ENGELBERG, SWITZERLAND.

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The Order of the Books

In the English Bible the books of the Old Testament are arranged, not in the order in which they appear in the Hebrew Bible, but in that assigned to them by the Greek translation. In this translation the various books are grouped according to their contents—first the historical books, then the poetic, and lastly the prophetic. This order has its advantages, but it obscures many important facts of which the Hebrew order preserves a reminiscence. The Hebrew Bible has also three divisions, known respectively as the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. *The Law* stands for the Pentateuch. *The Prophets* are subdivided into (i) the former prophets, that is, the historical books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings, regarded as four in number; and (ii) the latter prophets, that is, the prophets proper—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve (i.e. the Minor Prophets). *The Writings* designate all the rest of the books, usually in the following order—Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles.

It would somewhat simplify the scientific study even of the English Bible, if the Hebrew order could be restored, for it is in many ways instruc-

tive and important. It reveals the unique and separate importance of the Pentateuch; it suggests that the historical books from Joshua to Kings are to be regarded not only as histories, but rather as the illustration of prophetic principles; it raises a high probability that Ruth ought not to be taken with Judges, nor Lamentations with Jeremiah, nor Daniel with the prophets. It can be proved that the order of the divisions represents the order in which they respectively attained canonical importance—the law before 400 B.C., the prophets about 200 B.C., the writings about 100 B.C.—and, generally speaking, the latest books are in the last division. Thus we are led to suspect a relatively late origin for the Song and Ecclesiastes, and Chronicles, being late, will not be so important a historical authority as Kings. The facts suggested by the Hebrew order and confirmed by a study of the literature are sufficient to justify the adoption of that order in preference to that of the English Bible.

Genesis

THE Old Testament opens very impressively. In measured and dignified language it introduces the story of Israel's origin and settlement upon the land of Canaan (Gen.–Josh.) by the story of creation, i.–ii. 4*a*, and thus suggests, at the very beginning, the far-reaching purpose and the world-wide significance of the people and religion of Israel. The narrative has not travelled far till it becomes apparent that its dominant interests are to be religious and moral; for, after a pictorial sketch of man's place and task in the world, and of his need of woman's companionship, ii. 4*b*–25, it plunges at once into an account, wonderful alike in its poetic power and its psychological insight, of the tragic and costly[1] disobedience by which the divine purpose for man was at least temporarily frustrated (iii.). His progress in history is, morally considered, downward. Disobedience in the first generation becomes murder in the next, and it is to the offspring of the violent Cain that the arts and amenities of civilization are traced, iv. 1–22. Thus the first song in the Old Testament is a song of revenge,

[1] Death is the penalty (iii. 22–24). Another explanation of how death came into the world is given in the ancient and interesting fragment vi. 1–4.

iv. 23, 24, though this dark background of cruelty is not unlit by a gleam of religion, iv. 26. After the lapse of ten generations (v.) the world had grown so corrupt that God determined to destroy it by a flood; but because Noah was a good man, He saved him and his household and resolved never again to interrupt the course of nature in judgment (vi.–viii.). In establishing the covenant with Noah, emphasis is laid on the sacredness of blood, especially of the blood of man, ix. 1–17. Though grace abounds, however, sin also abounds. Noah fell, and his fall revealed the character of his children: the ancestor of the Semites, from whom the Hebrews sprang, is blessed, as is also Japheth, while the ancestor of the licentious Canaanites is cursed, ix. 18–27. From these three are descended the great families of mankind (x.) whose unity was confounded and whose ambitions were destroyed by the creation of diverse languages, xi. 1–9.

It is against this universal background that the story of the Hebrews is thrown; and in the new beginning which history takes with the call of Abraham, something like the later contrast between the church and the world is intended to be suggested. Upon the sombreness of human history as reflected in Gen. i.–xi., a new possibility breaks in Gen. xii., and the rest of the book is devoted to the fathers of the Hebrew people (xii.–l.). The most impressive figure from a religious point of view is Abraham, the oldest of them all, and the story of his discipline is told with great power, xi. 10–xxv. 10. He was a Semite, xi. 10–32, and under a divine impulse he migrated westward to Canaan, xii. 1–9.

There various fortunes befell him—famine which drove him to Egypt, peril through the beauty of his wife,[1] abounding and conspicuous prosperity—but through it all Abraham displayed a true magnanimity and enjoyed the divine favour, xii. 10–xiii., which was manifested even in a striking military success (xiv.). Despite this favour, however, he grew despondent, as he had no child. But there came to him the promise of a son, confirmed by a covenant (xv.), the symbol of which was to be circumcision (xvii.); and Abraham trusted God, unlike his wife, whose faith was not equal to the strain, and who sought the fulfilment of the promise in foolish ways of her own,[2] xvi., xviii. 1–15. Then follows the story of Abraham's earnest but ineffectual intercession for the wicked cities of the plain—a story which further reminds us how powerfully the narrative is controlled by moral and religious interests, xviii. 16–xix. Faith is rewarded at last by the birth of a son, xxi. 1–7, and Abraham's prosperity becomes so conspicuous that a native prince is eager to make a treaty with him, xxi. 22–34. The supreme test of his faith came to him in the impulse to offer his son to God in sacrifice; but at the critical moment a substitute was providentially provided, and Abraham's faith, which had stood so terrible a test, was rewarded by another renewal of the divine assurance (xxii.). His wife died, and for a burial-place he purchased from the

[1] This story (xii. 10–20) is duplicated in xx.; also in xxvi. 1–11 (of Isaac).

[2] The story of the expulsion of Hagar in xvi. is duplicated in xxi. 8–21.

natives a field and cave in Hebron, thus winning in the promised land ground he could legally call his own (xxiii.). Among his eastern kinsfolk a wife is providentially found for Isaac (xxiv.), who becomes his father's heir, xxv. 1–6. Then Abraham dies, xxv. 7–11, and the uneventful career of Isaac is briefly described in tales that partly duplicate[1] those told of his greater father, xxv. 7–xxvi.

The story of Isaac's son Jacob is as varied and romantic as his own was uneventful. He begins by fraudulently winning a blessing from his father, and has in consequence to flee the promised land, xxvii.–xxviii. 9. On the threshold of his new experiences he was taught in a dream the nearness of heaven to earth, and received the assurance that the God who had visited him at Bethel would be with him in the strange land and bring him back to his own, xxviii. 10–22. In the land of his exile, his fortunes ran a very checkered course (xxix.–xxxi.). In Laban, his Aramean kinsman, he met his match, and almost his master, in craft ; and the initial fraud of his life was more than once punished in kind. In due time, however, he left the land of his sojourn, a rich and prosperous man. But his discipline is not over when he reaches the home-land. The past rises up before him in the person of the brother whom he had wronged ; and besides reckoning with Esau, he has also to wrestle with God. He is embroiled in strife with the natives of the land, and he loses his beloved Rachel (xxxii.–xxxv.).

Into the later years of Jacob is woven the most

[1] xxvi. 1–11 = xii. 10–20 (xx.) ; xxvi. 26–33 = xxi. 22–34.

romantic story of all—that of his son Joseph (xxxvii.–l.)[1] the dreamer, who rose through persecution and prison, slander and sorrow (xxxvii.–xl.) to a seat beside the throne of Pharaoh (xli.). Nowhere is the providence that governs life and the Nemesis that waits upon sin more dramatically illustrated than in the story of Joseph. Again and again his guilty brothers are compelled to confront the past which they imagined they had buried out of sight for ever (xlii.–xliv.). But at last comes the gracious reconciliation between Joseph and them (xlv.), the tender meeting between Jacob and Joseph (xlvi.), the ultimate settlement of the family of Jacob in Egypt,[2] and the consequent transference of interest to that country for several generations. The book closes with scenes illustrating the wisdom and authority of Joseph in the time of famine (xlvii.), the dying Jacob blessing Joseph's sons (xlviii.), his parting words (in verse) to all his sons (xlix.), his death and funeral honours, l. 1–14, Joseph's magnanimous forgiveness of his brothers, and his death, in the sure hope that God would one day bring the Israelites back again to the land of Canaan, l. 15–26.

The unity of the book of Genesis is unmistakable; yet a close inspection reveals it to be rather a unity of idea than of execution. While in general it exhibits the gradual progress of the divine purpose on its way through primeval and patriarchal history,

[1] xxxvi. deals with the Edomite clans, and xxxviii. with the clans of Judah.

[2] In one version they are not exactly in Egypt, but near it, in Goshen (xlvii. 6).

in detail it presents a number of phenomena incompatible with unity of authorship. The theological presuppositions of different parts of the book vary widely; centuries of religious thought, for example, must lie between the God who partakes of the hospitality of Abraham under a tree (xviii.) and the majestic, transcendent, invisible Being at whose word the worlds are born (i.). The style, too, differs as the theological conceptions do: it is impossible not to feel the difference between the diffuse, precise, and formal style of ix. 1–17, and the terse, pictorial and poetic manner of the immediately succeeding section, ix. 18–27. Further, different accounts are given of the origin of particular names or facts: Beersheba is connected, e.g. with a treaty made, in one case, between Abraham and Abimelech, xxi. 31, in another, between Isaac and Abimelech, xxvi. 33. But perhaps the most convincing proof that the book is not an original literary unit is the lack of inherent continuity in the narrative of special incidents, and the occasional inconsistencies, sometimes between different parts of the book, sometimes even within the same section.

This can be most simply illustrated from the story of the Flood (vi. 5ff.), through which the beginner should work for himself—at first without suggestions from critical commentaries or introductions—as here the analysis is easy and singularly free from complications; the results reached upon this area can be applied and extended to the rest of the book. The problem might be attacked in some such way as follows. Ch. vi. 5–8 announces the wickedness of man and the purpose of God to des-

troy him ; throughout these verses the divine Being is called Jehovah.[1] In the next section, *vv.* 9–13, He is called by a different name—God (Hebrew, *Elohim*)—and we cannot but notice that this section adds nothing to the last ; *vv.* 9, 10 are an interruption, and *vv.* 11–13 but a repetition of *vv.* 5–8. Corresponding to the change in the divine name is a further change in the vocabulary, the word for *destroy* being different in *vv.* 7 and 13. Verses 14–22 continue the previous section with precise and minute instructions for the building of the ark, and in the later verses (cf. 18, 20) the precision tends to become diffuseness. The last verse speaks of the divine Being as God (Elohim), so that both the language and contents of *vv.* 9–22 show it to be a homogeneous section. Note that here, *vv.* 19, 20, two animals of every kind are to be taken into the ark, no distinction being drawn between the clean and the unclean. Noah must now be in the ark ; for we are told that he had done all that God commanded him, *vv.* 22, 18.

But, to our surprise, ch. vii. starts the whole story afresh with a divine command to Noah to enter the ark ; and this time, significantly enough, a distinction is made between the clean and the unclean—seven pairs of the former to enter and one pair of the latter (vii. 2). It is surely no accident that in this section the name of the divine Being is Jehovah, *vv.* 1, 5 ; and its contents follow naturally

[1] Wrongly represented by *the Lord* in the English version ; the American Revised Version always correctly renders by *Jehovah*. *God* in *v.* 5 is an unfortunate mistake of A. V. This ought also to be *the Lord*, or rather *Jehovah*.

on vi. 5–8. In other words we have here, not a continuous account, but two parallel accounts, one of which uses the name God, the other Jehovah, for the divine Being. This important conclusion is put practically beyond all doubt by the similarity between vi. 22 and vii. 5, which differ only in the use of the divine name. A close study of the characteristics of these sections whose origin is thus certain will enable us approximately to relegate to their respective sources other sections, verses, or fragments of verses in which the important clue, furnished by the name of the divine Being, is not present. Any verse, or group of verses, e.g. involving the distinction between the clean and the unclean, will belong to the *Jehovistic* source, as it is called (J). This is the real explanation of the confusion which every one feels who attempts to understand the story as a unity. It was always particularly hard to reconcile the apparently conflicting estimates of the duration of the Flood ; but as soon as the sources are separated, it becomes clear that, according to the Jehovist, it lasted sixty-eight days, according to the other source over a year (vii. 11, viii. 14).

Brief as the Flood story is, it furnishes us with material enough to study the characteristic differences between the sources out of which it is composed. The Jehovist is terse, graphic, and poetic ; it is this source in which occurs the fine description of the sending forth of the raven and the dove, viii. 6–12. It knows how to make a singularly effective use of concrete details : witness Noah putting out his hand and pulling the dove into the ark, and her

final return with an olive leaf in her mouth. A similarly graphic touch, interesting also for the sidelight it throws on the Jehovist's theological conceptions is that, when Noah entered the ark, "Jehovah closed the door behind him," vii. 16. Altogether different is the other source. It is all but lacking in poetic touches and concrete detail of this kind, and such an anthropomorphism as vii. 16 would be to it impossible. It is pedantically precise, giving the exact year, month, and even day when the Flood came, vii. 11, and when it ceased, viii. 13, 14. There is a certain legal precision about it which issues in diffuseness and repetition; over and over again occur such phrases as "fowl, cattle, creeping things, each after its kind," vi. 20, vii. 14, and the dimensions of the ark are accurately given. Where J had simply said, "Thou and all thy house," vii. 1, this source says, "Thou and thy sons and thy wife and thy sons' wives with thee," vi. 18. From the identity of interest and style between this source and the middle part of the Pentateuch, notably Leviticus, it is characterized as the priestly document and known to criticism as P.

Thus, though the mainstay of the analysis, or at least the original point of departure, is the difference in the names of the divine Being, many other phenomena, of vocabulary, style, and theology, are so distinctive that on the basis of them alone we could relegate many sections of Genesis with considerable confidence to their respective sources. In particular, P is especially easy to detect. For example, the use of the term Elohim, the repetitions, the precise and formal manner, the collocation of such phrases

as "fowl, cattle, creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth," i. 26 (cf. vii. 21), mark out the first story of creation, i.–ii. 4*a*, as indubitably belonging to P. Besides the stories of the creation and the flood, the longest and most important, though not quite the only passages[1] belonging to P are ix. 1–17 (the covenant with Noah), xvii. (the covenant with Abraham), and xxiii. (the purchase of a burial place for Sarah). This is a fact of the greatest significance. For P, the story of creation culminates in the institution of the Sabbath, the story of the flood in the covenant with Noah, with the law concerning the sacredness of blood, the covenant with Abraham is sealed by circumcision, and the purchase of Machpelah gives Abraham legal right to a footing in the promised land. In other words the interests of this source are legal and ritual. This becomes abundantly plain in the next three books of the Pentateuch, but even in Genesis it may be justly inferred from the unusual fulness of the narrative at these four points.

When we examine what is left in Genesis, after deducting the sections that belong to P, we find that the word God (Elohim), characteristic of P, is still very frequently and in some sections exclusively used. The explanation will appear when we come to deal with Exodus: meantime the fact must be carefully noted. Ch. xx., e.g., uses the word Elohim,

[1] The curious ch. xiv. is written under the influence of P. Here also ritual interests play a part in the tithes paid to the priest of Salem, *v.* 20 (i.e. Jerusalem). In spite of its array of ancient names, xiv. 1, 2, which have been partially corroborated by recent discoveries, this chapter is, for several reasons, believed to be one of the latest in the Pentateuch.

but it has no other mark characteristic of P. It is neither formal nor diffuse in style nor legal in spirit; it is as concrete and almost as graphic as anything in J. Indeed the story related—Abraham's denial of his wife—is actually told in that document, xii. 10–20 (also of Isaac, xxvi. 1–11); and in general the history is covered by this document, which is called the Elohist [1] and known to criticism as E, in much the same spirit, and with an emphasis upon much the same details, as by J. In opposition to P, these are known as the prophetic documents, because they were written or at least put together under the influence of prophetic ideas. The close affinity of these two documents renders it much more difficult to distinguish them from each other than to distinguish either of them from P, but within certain limits the attempt may be successfully made. The basis of it must, of course, be a study of the duplicate versions of the same incidents; that is, such a narrative as ch. xx., which uses the word God (Elohim) is compared with its parallel in xii. 10–20, which uses the word Jehovah, and in this way the distinctive features and interests of each document will most readily be found. The parallel suggested is easy and instructive, and it reveals the relative ethical and theological superiority of E to J. J tells the story of Abraham's falsehood with a quaint naïveté (xii.); E is offended by it and excuses it (xx.). The theological refinement of E is suggested not only here, xx. 3, 6, but elsewhere, by the frequency with which God appears in dreams

[1] In this way it is distinguished from P, which, as we have seen, is also Elohistic, but is not now so called.

and not in bodily presence as in J (cf. iii. 8). Similarly the expulsion of Hagar, which in J is due to Sarah's jealousy (xvi.), in E. is attributed to a command of God, xxi. 8–21 ; and the success of Jacob with the sheep, which in J is due to his skill and cunning, xxx. 29–43, is referred in E to the intervention of God, xxxi. 5–12. In general it may be said that J, while religious, is also natural, whereas E tends to emphasize the supernatural, and thus takes the first step towards the austere theology of P.[1]

J is the most picturesque and fascinating of all the sources—attractive alike for its fine poetic power and its profound religious insight. This is the source which describes the wooing of Isaac's bride (xxiv.), and the meeting of Jacob and Rachel at the well, xxix. 2–14 ; in this source, too, which appears to be the most primitive of all, there are speaking animals—the serpent, e.g., in Genesis iii. (and the ass in Num. xxii. 28). The story of the origin of sin, in every respect a masterpiece, is told by J ; we do not know whether to admire more the ease with which Jehovah, like a skilful judge, by a few penetrating questions drives the guilty pair to an involuntary confession, or the fidelity with which

[1] A detailed justification of the grounds of the critical analysis will be found in Professor Driver's elaborate and admirable *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, where every section throughout the Hexateuch is referred to its special documentary source. To readers who desire to master the detail, that work or one of the following will be indispensable : *The Hexateuch*, edited by Carpenter and Battersby, Addis's *Documents of the Hexateuch*, Bacon's *Genesis of Genesis* and *Triple Tradition of the Exodus*, or Kent's *Student's Old Testament* (vol. i.)

the whole immortal scene reflects the eternal facts of human nature. The religious teaching of J is extraordinarily powerful and impressive, all the more that it is never directly didactic; it shines through the simple and unstudied recital of concrete incident.

It is one of the most delicate and not the least important tasks of criticism to discover by analysis even the sources which lie so close to each other as J and E, for the literary efforts represented by these documents are but the reflection of religious movements. They testify to the affection which the people cherished for the story of their past; and when we have arranged them in chronological order, they enable us further, as we have seen, to trace the progress of moral and religious ideas. But, for several reasons, it is not unfair, and, from the beginner's point of view, it is perhaps even advisable, to treat these documents together as a unity: *firstly*, because they were actually combined, probably in the seventh century, into a unity (JE), and sometimes, as in the Joseph story, so skilfully that it is very difficult to distinguish the component parts and assign them to their proper documentary source; *secondly*, because, for a reason to be afterwards stated, beyond Ex. iii. the analysis is usually supremely difficult; and, *lastly*, because in language and spirit, the prophetic documents are very like each other and altogether unlike the priestly document. For practical purposes, then, the broad distinction into prophetic and priestly will generally be sufficient. Wherever the narrative is graphic, powerful, and interesting, we may be sure that it is

prophetic,[1] whereas the priestly document is easily recognizable by its ritual interests, and by its formal, diffuse, and legal style.

The documents already discussed constitute the chief sources of the book of Genesis; but there are occasional fragments which do not seem originally to have belonged to any of them. There were also collections of poetry, such as the Book of Jashar (cf. Josh. x. 13; 2 Sam. i. 18), at the disposal of those who wrote or compiled the documents, and to such a collection the parting words of Jacob may have belonged (xlix.). The poem is in reality a characterization of the various *tribes*; *v.* 15, and still more plainly *vv.* 23, 24, look back upon historical events. The reference to Levi, *vv.* 5–7, which takes no account of the priestly prerogatives of that tribe, shows that the poem is early (cf. xxxiv. 25); but the description of the prosperity of Joseph (i.e. Ephraim and Manasseh), *vv.* 22–26, and the pre-eminence of Judah, *vv.* 8–12, bring it far below patriarchal times—at least into the period of the Judges. If *vv.* 8–12 is an allusion to the triumphs of David and *vv.* 22–26 to northern Israel, the poem as a whole, which can hardly be later than Solomon's time—for it celebrates Israel and Judah equally—could not be earlier than David's; but

[1] If inconsistencies, contradictions or duplicates appear in the section which is clearly prophetic, the student may be practically certain that these are to be referred to the two prophetic sources. Cf. the two derivations of the name of Joseph in consecutive verses whose source is at once obvious: "*God* (Elohim) has taken away my reproach" (E); and "*Jehovah* adds to me another son" (J), Gen. xxx. 23, 24. Cf. also the illustrations adduced on pp. 13, 14.

probably the various utterances concerning the different tribes arose at different times.

The religious interest of Genesis is very high, the more so as almost every stage of religious reflection is represented in it, from the most primitive to the most mature. Through the ancient stories there gleam now and then flashes from a mythological background, as in the intermarriage of angels with mortal women, vi. 1–4, or in the struggle of the mighty Jacob, who could roll away the great stone from the mouth of the well, xxix. 2, 10, with his supernatural visitant, xxxii. 24. It is a long step from the second creation story in which God, like a potter, fashions men out of moist earth, ii. 7, and walks in the garden of Paradise in the cool of the day, iii. 8, to the first, with its sublime silence on the mysterious processes of creation (i.). But the whole book, and especially the prophetic section, is dominated by a splendid sense of the reality of God, His interest in men, His horror of sin, His purpose to redeem. Broadly speaking, the religion of the book stands upon a marvellously high moral level. It is touched with humility—its heroes know that they are "not worth of all the love and the faithfulness" which God shows them, xxxii. 10; and it is marked by a true inwardness—for it is not works but implicit trust in God that counts for righteousness, xv. 16. Yet in practical ways, too, this religion finds expression in national and individual life; it protests vehemently against human sacrifice (xxii.), and it strengthens a lonely youth in an hour of terrible temptation, xxxix. 9.

Exodus

THE book of Exodus—so named in the Greek version from the march of Israel out of Egypt—opens upon a scene of oppression very different from the prosperity and triumph in which Genesis had closed. Israel is being cruelly crushed by the new dynasty which has arisen in Egypt (i.) and the story of the book is the story of her redemption. Ultimately it is Israel's God that is her redeemer, but He operates largely by human means; and the first step is the preparation of a deliverer, Moses, whose parentage, early training, and fearless love of justice mark him out as the coming man (ii.). In the solitude and depression of the desert, he is encouraged by the sight of a bush, burning yet unconsumed, and sent forth with a new vision of God [1] upon his great and perilous task (iii.). Though thus divinely equipped, he hesitated, and God gave him a helper in Aaron his brother (iv.). Then begins the Titanic struggle between Moses and Pharaoh—Moses the champion of justice, Pharaoh the incarnation of might (v.). Blow after blow falls from Israel's God upon the obstinate king of Egypt and his unhappy land: the water of the Nile is turned into blood (vii.),

[1] The story of the revelation of Israel's God under His new name, Jehovah, is told twice (in ch. iii. and ch. vi.).

there are plagues of frogs, gnats, gadflies (viii.), murrain, boils, hail (ix.), locusts, darkness (x.), and —last and most terrible of all—the smiting of the first-born, an event in connexion with which the passover was instituted. Then Pharaoh yielded. Israel went forth; and the festival of unleavened bread was ordained for a perpetual memorial (xi., xii.); also the first-born of man and beast was consecrated, xiii. 1–16.

Israel's troubles, however, were not yet over. Their departing host was pursued by the impenitent Pharaoh, but miraculously delivered at the Red Sea, in which the Egyptian horses and horsemen were overwhelmed, xiii. 17–xiv. The deliverance was celebrated in a splendid song of triumph, xv. 1–21. Then they began their journey to Sinai—a journey which revealed alike the faithlessness and discontent of their hearts, and the omnipotent and patient bounty of their God, manifested in delivering them from the perils of hunger, thirst and war, xv. 22–xvii. 16. On the advice of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, God-fearing men were appointed to decide for the people on all matters of lesser moment, while the graver cases were still reserved for Moses (xviii.)[1] The arrival at Sinai marked a crisis; for it was there that the epoch-making covenant was made —Jehovah promising to continue His grace to the people, and they, on their part, pledging themselves to obedience. Thunder and lightning and dark

[1] This chapter is apparently misplaced. In Deut. i. 9–18 the incident is set just before the *departure from* Sinai (cf. i. 19). It may therefore originally have stood after Ex. xxxiv. 9 or before Num. x. 29.

storm-clouds accompanied the proclamation of the ten commandments,[1] which represented the claims made by Jehovah upon the people whom He had redeemed, xix.–xx. 22. Connected with these claims are certain statutes, partly of a religious but much more of a civil nature, which Moses is enjoined to lay upon the people, and obedience to which is to be rewarded by prosperity and a safe arrival at the promised land, xx. 23–xxiii. 33. This section is known as the Book of the Covenant, xxiv. 7. The people unitedly promised implicit obedience to the terms of this covenant, which was then sealed with the blood of sacrifice. After six days of preparation, Moses ascended the mountain in obedience to the voice of Jehovah (xxiv.).

At this point the story takes on a distinctly priestly complexion, and interest is transferred from the fortunes of the people to the construction of the sanctuary, for which the most minute directions are given (xxv.–xxxi.), concerning the tabernacle with all its furniture, the ark, the table for the shew-bread, the golden candlestick (xxv.), the four-fold covering for the tabernacle, the wood-work, the veil between the holy and the most holy place, the curtain for the door (xxvi.), the altar, the court round about the tabernacle, the oil for the light (xxvii.), the sacred vestments for the high priest and the other priests (xxviii.), the manner of consecration of the priests, the priestly dues, the atonement for the altar, the morning and evening offering

[1] Or rather, the ten words. In another source, the commands are given differently, and are ritual rather than moral, xxxiv. 10–28 (J).

(xxix.), the altar of incense, the poll-tax, the laver, the holy oil, the incense (xxx.), the names and divine equipment of the overseers of the work of constructing the tabernacle, the sanctity of the Sabbath as a sign of the covenant (xxxi.).

After this priestly digression, the thread of the story is resumed. During the absence of Moses upon the mount, the people imperilled their covenant relationship with their God by worshipping Him in the form of a calf; but, on the very earnest intercession of Moses they were forgiven, and there was given to him the special revelation of Jehovah as a God of forgiving pity and abounding grace. In the tent to which the people regularly resorted to learn the divine will, God was wont to speak to Moses face to face, xxxii. 1–xxxiv. 9. Then follows the other version of the decalogue already referred to—ritual rather than moral, xxxiv. 10–28—and an account of the transfiguration of Moses, as he laid Jehovah's commands upon the people, xxxiv. 29–35. From this point to the end of the book the atmosphere is again unmistakably priestly. Chs. xxxv.–xxxix, beginning with the Sabbath law, assert with a profusion of detail that the instructions given in xxv.–xxxi. were carried out to the letter. Then the tabernacle was set up on New Year's day, the divine glory filled it, and the subsequent movements of the people were guided by cloud and fire (xl.).

The unity of Exodus is not quite so impressive as that of Genesis. This is due to the different proportion in which the sources are blended, P playing a much more conspicuous part here than there.

Without hesitation, more than one-fourth of the book may be at once relegated to this source : viz. xxv.–xxxi., which describe the tabernacle to be erected with all that pertained to it, and xxxv.–xl., which relate that the instructions there given were fully carried out. The minuteness, the formality and monotony of style which we noticed in Genesis reappear here ; but the real spirit of P, its devotion to everything connected with the sanctuary and worship, is much more obvious here than there. This document is also fairly prominent in the first half of the book, and its presence is usually easy to detect. The section, e.g., on the institution of the passover and the festival of unleavened bread, xi. 9–xii. 20, is easily recognized as belonging to this source. Of very great importance is the passage, vi. 2–13, which describes the revelation given to Moses, asserting that the fathers knew the God of Israel only by the name El Shaddai, while the name of Jehovah, which was then revealed to Moses for the first time, was unknown to them. The succeeding genealogy which traces the descent of Moses and Aaron to Levi, vi. 14–30, and Aaron's commission to be the spokesman of Moses, vii. 1–7, also come from P. This source also gives a brief account of the oppression and the plagues, and the prominence of Aaron the priest in the story of the latter is very significant. In E the plagues come when *Moses* stretches out his hand or his rod at the command of Jehovah, ix. 22, x. 12, 21 ; in P, Jehovah says to Moses, " Say unto *Aaron*, ' Stretch forth thy hand ' or ' thy rod,' " viii. 5, 16.

The story to which we have just alluded, of the

revelation of the name Jehovah, is also told in ch. iii., where it is connected with the incident of the burning bush. Apart from the improbability of the same document telling the same story twice, the very picturesque setting of ch. iii. is convincing proof that we have here a section from one of the prophetic documents, and we cannot long doubt which it is. For while one of those documents (J), as we have seen, uses the word Jehovah without scruple throughout the whole of Genesis, and regards that name as known not only to Abraham, xv. 7, but even to the antediluvians, iv. 26, the other regularly uses Elohim. This prophetic story, then, of the revelation of the name Jehovah to Moses, must belong to E, who deliberately avoids the name Jehovah throughout Genesis, because he considers it unknown before the time of Moses. This very fact, however, greatly complicates the subsequent analysis of the prophetic documents in the Pentateuch; because, from this point on, both are now free to use the name Jehovah of the divine Being, and thus one of the principal clues to the analysis practically disappears.[1] Considering the affinity of these documents, it is therefore competent, as we have seen, to treat them as a unity.

The proof, however, that both prophetic documents are really present in Exodus, if not at first sight obvious or extensive, is at any rate convincing. In one source, e.g. (J), the Israelites dwell by themselves in a district called Goshen, viii. 22 (cf. Gen. xlv. 10); in the other, they dwell among the Egyp-

[1] Naturally there are other very important and valuable clues, e.g. the holy mount is called Sinai in J and Horeb in E.

tians as neighbours, so that the women can borrow jewels from them, iii. 22, and their doors have to be marked with blood on the night of the passover to distinguish them from the Egyptians, xii. 22. Again in J, the people number over 600,000, xii. 37 ; in E they are so few that they only require two midwives, i. 15. Similar slight but significant differences may be found elsewhere, particularly in the account of the plagues. In J, e.g., Moses predicts the punishment that will fall if Pharaoh refuses his request, and next day Jehovah sends it : in E, Moses works the wonders by raising his rod. In Exodus, as in Genesis, J reveals the divine through the natural, E rather through the supernatural. It is an east wind, e.g., in J, as in the poem, xv. 10, that drives back the Red Sea, xiv. 21*a* (as it had brought the locusts, x. 13) ; in E this happens on the raising of Moses' rod, xiv. 16. Here again, as in Genesis, we find that E has taken the first step on the way to P. For this miracle (in E) at the Red Sea, which in J is essentially natural, and miraculous only in happening at the critical moment, is considerably heightened in P, who relates that the waters were a wall unto the people on the right hand and on the left, xiv. 22.

These three great documents constitute the principal sources of the book of Exodus ; but here, as in Genesis, there are fragments that belong to a more primitive order of ideas than that represented by the compilers of the documents (cf. iv. 24–26) ; there is, besides the two decalogues, a body of legislation, xx. 23–xxiii. 33 ; and there is a poem, xv. 1–18. The *Book of the Covenant*, as it is called, is a body of mainly civil but partly religious law, prac-

tically independent of the narrative. The style and contents of the code show that it is not all of a piece, but must have been of gradual growth. The 2nd pers. sing., e.g., sometimes alternates with the pl. in consecutive verses, xxii. 21, 22. Again, while some of the laws state, in the briefest possible words, the official penalty attached to a certain crime, xxi. 12, others are longer and introduce a religious sanction, xxii. 23, 24, and a few deal definitely with religious feasts, xxiii. 14–19, obligations, xxii. 29–31, or sanctuaries, xx. 23–26. In general, the code implies the settled life of an agricultural and pastoral people, and the community for which it is designed must have already attained a certain measure of organization, as we must assume that there were means for enacting the penalties threatened. A remarkably humanitarian spirit pervades the code. It mitigates the lot of the slave, it encourages a spirit of justice in social relations, and it exhibits a fine regard for the poor and defenceless, xxii. 21–27. It probably represents the juristic usages, or at least ideals, of the early monarchy.

The *Song of Moses*, xv. 1–18, also appears to belong to the monarchy. The explicit mention of Philistia, Edom and Moab in *vv.* 14, 15 imply that the people are already settled in Canaan, and the sanctuary in *v.* 17*b* is most naturally, if not necessarily, interpreted of the temple. The poem appears to be an elaboration of the no doubt ancient lines :

> Sing to Jehovah, for He hath triumphed gloriously ;
> The horse and his rider He hath thrown into the sea (xv. 21).

The religious, as opposed to the theological, in-

terest of the book lies entirely within the prophetic sources. Here the drama of redemption begins in earnest, and it is worked out on a colossal scale. From his first blow struck in the cause of justice to the day on which, in indignation and astonishment, he destroyed the golden calf, Moses is a figure of overwhelming moral earnestness. Few books in the Old Testament have a higher conception of God than Exodus. The words of the decalogue are His words, xx. 1, and the protest against the calf-worship (xxxii.–xxxiv.) is an indirect plea for His spirituality. But the highest heights are touched in the revelation of Him as merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, xxxiv. 6—a revelation which lived to the latest days and was cherished in these very words by the pious hearts of Israel (cf. Pss. lxxxvi. 15 ; ciii. 8 ; cxi. 4 ; cxlv. 8).

Leviticus

The emphasis which modern criticism has very properly laid on the prophetic books and the prophetic element generally in the Old Testament, has had the effect of somewhat diverting popular attention from the priestly contributions to the literature and religion of Israel. From this neglect Leviticus has suffered most. Yet for many reasons it is worthy of close attention; it is the deliberate expression of the priestly mind of Israel at its best, and it thus forms a welcome foil to the unattractive pictures of the priests which confront us on the pages of the prophets during the three centuries between Hosea and Malachi. And if we should be inclined to deplore the excessively minute attention to ritual, and the comparatively subordinate part played by ethical considerations in this priestly manual, it is only fair to remember that the hymn-book used by these scrupulous ministers of worship was the Psalter—enough surely to show that the ethical and spiritual aspects of religion, though not prominent, were very far from being forgotten. In xvii.-xxvi. the ethical element receives a fine and almost surprising prominence: the injunction to abstain from idolatry, e.g., is immediately preceded by the injunction to reverence father and mother,

xix. 3, 4. Indeed, ch. xix. is a good compendium of the ethics of ancient Israel; and, while hardly to be compared with Job xxxi., still, in its care for the resident alien, and in its insistence upon motives of benevolence and humanity, it is an eloquent reminder of the moral elevation of Israel's religion, and is peculiarly welcome in a book so largely devoted to the externals of the cult.

The book of Leviticus illustrates the origin and growth of law. Occasionally legislation is clothed in the form of narrative—the law of blasphemy, e.g., xxiv. 10–23 (cf. x. 16–20)—thus suggesting its origin in a particular historical incident (cf. 1 Sam. xxx. 25); and traces of growth are numerous, notably in the differences between the group xvii.–xxvi. and the rest of the book, and very ancient heathen elements are still visible through the transformations effected by the priests of Israel, as in the case of Azazel xvi. 8,22, a demon of the wilderness, akin to the Arabic jinns. Strictly speaking, though Leviticus is pervaded by a single spirit, it is not quite homogeneous: the first group of laws, e.g. (i.-vii.), expressly acknowledges different sources—certain laws being given in the tent of meeting, i. 1, others on Mount Sinai, vii. 38. The sections are well defined—note the subscriptions at the end of vii. and xxvi.—and marked everywhere by the scrupulous precision of the legal mind.

There is no trace in Leviticus of the prophetic document JE. That the book is essentially a law book rather than a continuation of the narrative of the Exodus is made plain by the fact that that narrative (Ex. xl.) is not even formally resumed till ch. viii.

I. Laws of Sacrifice (i.–vii.)

(*a*) *For worshippers*, i.–vi. 7. Laws for the burnt offering of the herd, of the flock, and of fowls (i.). Laws for the different kinds of cereal offerings—the use of salt compulsory, honey and leaven prohibited (ii.). Laws for the peace-offering—the offerer kills it, the priest sprinkles the blood on the sides of the altar and burns the fat (iii.). For an unconscious transgression of the law, the high priest shall offer a bullock, the community shall offer the same, a ruler shall offer a he-goat, one of the common people shall offer a female animal (iv.). A female animal shall be offered for certain legal and ceremonial transgressions ; the poor may offer two turtle doves, or pigeons, or even flour, v. 1–13. Sacred dues unintentionally withheld or the property of another man dishonestly retained must be restored together with twenty per cent. extra, v. 14–vi. 7.

(*b*) *For priests*, vi. 8–vii. 38. Laws regulating the daily burnt offering, the cereal offering, the daily cereal offering of the high priest, and the ordinary sin offering, vi. 8–30. Laws regulating the guilt offering, the priests' share of the sacrifices, the period during which the flesh of sacrifice may be eaten, the prohibition of the eating of fat and blood (vii.).

II. The Consecration of the Priesthood (viii.–x.)

This section is the direct continuation of Exodus xl., which prescribes the inauguration of Aaron and his sons into the priestly office. Laws regulating

the consecration of the high priest and the other priests—washing, investiture, anointing, sin offering, burnt offering, with accompanying rites (viii., cf. Exod. xxix.). The first sacrificial service at which Aaron and his sons officiate—the benediction being followed by the appearance of Jehovah's glory (ix.). The first violation of the law of worship and its signal punishment, x. 1–7. Officiating priests forbidden to use wine, x. 8–11. Priests' share of the meal and peace offerings, x. 12–15. An error forgiven after an adroit explanation by Aaron (law in narrative form), x. 16–20.

III. Laws Concerning the Clean and the Unclean (xi.–xvi.)

This section appropriately follows x. 10, where the priests are enjoined to distinguish between the clean and the unclean. Laws concerning the animals which may or may not be eaten—quadrupeds, fish, birds, flying insects, creeping insects, reptiles—and pollution through contact with carcasses (xi.). Laws concerning the purification of women after childbirth (xii.). Laws for the detection of leprosy in the human body, xiii. 1–46, and in garments, xiii. 47–59. Laws for the purification of the leper and his readoption into the theocracy, xiv. 1–32. Laws concerning houses afflicted with leprosy, xiv. 33–57. Laws concerning purification after sexual secretions (xv.). The laws of purification are appropriately concluded by the law for the great day of atonement, with regulations for the ceremonial cleansing of the

high priest and his house, the sanctuary, altar, and people (xvi.). Two originally independent sections appear to be blended in this chapter—one (cf. *vv.* 1–4) prescribing regulations to be observed by the high priest on every occasion on which he should enter the inner sanctuary, the other with specific reference to the great day of atonement.

IV. Law of Holiness (xvii.–xxvi.)

This section, though still moving largely among ritual interests, differs markedly from the rest of the book, partly by reason of its hortatory setting (cf. xxvi.), but especially by its emphasis on the ethical elements in religion. It has been designated the Law of Holiness because of the frequently recurring phrase, "Ye shall be holy, for I, Jehovah, am holy," xix. 2, xx. 26—a phrase which, though not peculiar to this section (cf. xi. 44), is highly characteristic of it. Animals are to be slaughtered for food or sacrifice only at the sanctuary xvii. 1–9; the blood and flesh of animals dying naturally or torn by beasts is not to be eaten, xvii. 10–16. Laws regulating marriage and chastity with threats of dire punishment for violation of the same (xviii.). Penalties for Moloch worship, soothsaying, cursing of parents and unchastity (xx.), with a hortatory conclusion, xx. 22–24, similar to xviii. 24–30.

Ch. xix. is the most prophetic chapter in Leviticus, and bears a close analogy to the decalogue, *vv.* 3–8 corresponding to the first table, and *vv.* 11–18 to the second. The holiness which Jehovah demands

has to express itself not only in reverence for Himself and His Sabbaths, but in reverence towards parents and the aged; in avoiding not only idolatry and heathen superstition, but dishonesty and unkindness to the weak. The ideal is a throroughly moral one. A modern reader is surprised to find in so ethical a chapter a prohibition of garments made of two kinds of stuff mingled together *v.* 19; no doubt such a prohibition is aimed at some heathen superstition—perhaps the practice of magic.

Laws concerning priests and sacrifices (xxi., xxii.). The holiness of the priests is to be maintained by avoiding, as a rule (without exception in the case of the high priest), pollution through corpses and participation in certain mourning rites, and by conforming to certain conditions in their choice of a wife. The physically deformed are to be ineligible for the priesthood (xxi.). Regulations to safeguard the ceremonial purity of the sacred food: imperfect or deformed animals ineligible for sacrifice (xxii.). In ch. xxiii., which is a calendar of sacred festivals, the festivals are enumerated in the order in which they occur in the year, beginning with spring—the passover, regarded as preliminary to the feast of unleavened bread; the feast of weeks (Pentecost) seven weeks afterwards; the new year's festival, on the first day of the seventh month; the day of atonement; and the festival of booths. There are signs that the section dealing with new year's day and the day of atonement, *vv.* 23–32, is later than the original form of the rest of the chapter dealing with the three great ancient festivals that rested on agriculture and the vintage. Of kindred theme to

this chapter is ch. xxv.—the sacred years—(*a*) the sabbatical year : the land, like the man, must enjoy a Sabbath rest, *vv.* 1–7 ; (*b*) the jubilee year, an intensification of the Sabbatical idea : every fiftieth year is to be a period of rest for the land, liberation of Hebrew slaves, and restoration of property to its original owners or legal heirs, *vv.* 8–55. In xxiv. 1–9 are regulations concerning the lampstand and the shewbread ; the law, in the form of a narrative, prohibiting blasphemy, *vv.* 10–23, is interrupted by a few laws concerning injury to the person, *vv.* 17–22.

The *laws of holiness* conclude (xxvi.) with a powerful exposition of the blessing which will follow obedience and the curse which is the penalty of disobedience. The curse reaches a dramatic climax in the threat of exile, from which, however, deliverance is promised on condition of repentance.

Ch. xxvii. constitutes no part of the Law of Holiness—note the subscription in xxvi. 46. It contains regulations for the commutation of vows (whether persons, cattle or things) and tithes—commutation being inadmissible in the case of firstlings of animals fit for sacrifice and of things and persons that had come under the ban.

Special importance attaches to the Law of Holiness, known to criticism as H (xvii.–xxvi.). In its interest in worship, it marks a very long advance on the Book of the Covenant (Exod. xxi.–xxiii.), and it would seem to stand somewhere between Deuteronomy and the priestly codex. It is profoundly interested, like the former, in the ethical side of religion, and yet it is almost as deeply concerned about ritual as the latter. But though it may be

regarded as a preliminary step to the priestly code, it is clearly distinguished from it, both by its tone and its vocabulary : the word for idols, e.g. (things of nought), xix. 4, xxvi. 1, does not occur elsewhere in the Pentateuch. It specially emphasizes the holiness of Jehovah ; as has been said, in H He is the person *to whom* the cult is performed, while the question of *how* is more elaborately dealt with in P. There are stray allusions which almost seem to point to pre-exilic days ; e.g. to idols, xxvi. 30, Moloch being explicitly mentioned, xviii. 21, xx. 2 ; and the various sanctuaries presupposed by xxvi. 31 would almost seem to carry us back to a point before the promulgation of Deuteronomy in 621 B.C. ; but on the other hand the exile appears to be presupposed in xviii. 24–30, xxvi. 34. This code, like all the others in the Old Testament, was no doubt the result of gradual growth—note the alternation of 2nd pers. sing. and pl. in ch. xix.—but the main body of it may be placed somewhere between 600 and 550 B.C. The section bears so strong a resemblance to Ezekiel that he has been supposed by some to be the author, but this is improbable.

It is easy to see how the minuteness of the ritual religion of Leviticus could degenerate into casuistry. Its emphasis on externals is everywhere visible, and its lack of kindly human feeling is only too conspicuous in its treatment of the leper, xiii. 45, 46. But over against this, to say nothing of the profound symbolism of the ritual, must be set the moral virility of the law of holiness—its earnest inculcation of commercial honour, reverence for the aged, xix.

32, and even unselfish love. For it is to this source that we owe the great word adopted by our Saviour, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," xix. 18, though the first part of the verse shows that this noble utterance still moves within the limitations of the Old Testament

Numbers

LIKE the last part of Exodus, and the whole of Leviticus, the first part of Numbers, i.–x. 28—so called,[1] rather inappropriately, from the census in i., iii., (iv.), xxvi.—is unmistakably priestly in its interests and language. Beginning with a census of the men of war (i.) and the order of the camp (ii.), it devotes specific attention to the Lèvites, their numbers and duties (iii., iv.). Then follow laws for the exclusion of the unclean, v. 1–4, for determining the manner and amount of restitution in case of fraud, v. 5–10, the guilt or innocence of a married woman suspected of unfaithfulness, v. 11–31, and the obligations of the Nazirite vow, vi. 1–21. This legal section ends with the priestly benediction, vi. 22–27. Then, closely connected with the narrative in Exodus xl., is an unusually elaborate account of the dedication gifts that were offered on the occasion of the erection of the tabernacle (vii.). This quasi-historical interlude is again followed by a few sections of a more

[1] In the Greek version, followed by the Latin. This is the only book of the Pentateuch in which the English version has retained the Latin title, the other titles being all Greek. The Hebrew titles are usually borrowed from the opening words of the book. The Hebrew title of Numbers is either "And he said" or "in the wilderness"; the latter is fairly appropriate—certainly much more so than the Greek.

legal nature—instructions for fixing the lamps upon the lampstand, viii. 1–4, for the consecration of the Levites and their period of service, viii. 5–26, for the celebration of the passover, and, in certain cases, of a supplementary passover, ix. 1–14. Then, with the divine guidance assured, and the order of march determined, the start from Sinai was made, ix. 15–x. 28.

At this point, the old prophetic narrative (Exod. xxxii.–xxxiv.), interrupted by Exodus xxxv. 1–Numbers x. 28, is resumed with an account of the precautions taken to secure reliable guidance through the wilderness, x. 29–32, and a very interesting snatch of ancient poetry, through which we may easily read the unique importance of the ark for early Israel, x. 33–36. The succeeding chapters make no pretence to be a connected history of the wilderness period ; the incidents with which they deal are very few, and these are related rather for their religious than their historical significance, e.g. the murmuring of the people, the terrible answer to their prayer for flesh, the divine equipment of the seventy elders, the magnanimity of Moses (xi.), and the vindication of his prophetic dignity (xii.). Before the actual assault on Canaan, spies were sent out to investigate the land. But the people allowed themselves to be discouraged by their report, and for their unbelief the whole generation except Caleb (and Joshua)[1] was doomed to die in the wilderness, without a sight of the promised land (xiii., xiv.). The thread of the narrative, broken at this point by laws relating to

[1] Caleb alone in JE, Joshua also in P.

offerings and sacrifices, xv. 1–31, the hallowing of the Sabbath, xv. 32–36, and the wearing of fringes, xv. 37–41, is at once resumed by a complicated account of a rebellion against Moses, which ended in the destruction of the rebels, and in the signal vindication of the authority of Moses, the privileges of the tribe of Levi, and the exclusive right of the sons of Aaron to the priesthood (xvi., xvii.). Again the narrative element gives place to legislation regulating the duties, relative position and revenues of the priests and Levites (xviii.) and the manner of purification after defilement (xix.).

These laws are followed by a section of continuous narrative. Moses and Aaron, for certain rebellious words, are divinely warned that they will not be permitted to bring the people into the promised land—a warning which was followed soon afterwards by the death of Aaron on Mount Hor. Edom haughtily refused Israel permission to pass through her land (xx.). Sore at heart, they fretted against God and Moses, and deadly serpents were sent among them in chastisement, but the penitent and believing were restored by the power of God and the intercession of Moses. Then Israel turned north, and began her career of conquest by defeating Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan (xxi.). Her success struck terror into the heart of Balak, the king of Moab; he accordingly sent for Balaam, a famous soothsayer, with the request that he would curse Israel (xxii.). Instead, however, he foretold for her a splendid destiny (xxiii., xxiv.). But the reality fell pitifully short of this fair ideal, for Israel at once succumbed to the seductions of

idolatry and impurity,[1] and the fearful punishment which fell upon her for her sin was only stayed by the zeal of Phinehas, the high priest's son, who was rewarded with the honour of perpetual priesthood, xxv. 1–15. Implacable enmity was enjoined against Midian, xxv. 16–18.

From this point to the end of the book the narrative is, with few exceptions, distinctly priestly in complexion ; the vivid scenes of the older narrative are absent, and their place is taken, for the most part, either by statistics and legislative enactments or by narrative which is only legislation in disguise. A census (xxvi.) was taken at the end, as at the beginning of the wanderings (i.), which showed that, except Caleb and Joshua, the whole generation had perished (cf. xiv. 29, 34). Then follow sections on the law of inheritance of daughters, xxvii. 1–11, the announcement of Moses' imminent death and the appointment of Joshua his successor, xxvii. 12–23, a priestly calendar defining the sacrifices appropriate to each season (xxviii., xxix.), and the law of vows (xxx.). In accordance with the injunction of xxv. 16–18 a war of extermination was successfully undertaken against Midian (xxxi.). The land east of the Jordan was allotted to Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, on condition that they would help the other tribes to conquer the west (xxxii.). Following an itinerary of the wanderings from the exodus to the plains of Moab (xxxiii.) is a description of the boundaries of the land allotted to the various

[1] Moabite idolatry, and intermarriage with the Midianites—ultimately, it would seem, the same story. JE gives the beginning of it, *vv.* 1–5, and P the conclusion, *vv.* 6–18.

tribes (xxxiv.), directions for the Levitical cities and the cities of refuge (xxxv.), and, last of all, a law in narrative form, determining that heiresses who possessed landed property should marry into their own tribe (xxxvi.).

Even this brief sketch of the book of Numbers is enough to reveal the essential incoherence of its plan, and the great divergence of the elements out of which it is composed. No book in the Pentateuch makes so little the impression of a unity. The phenomena of Exodus are here repeated and intensified; a narrative of the intensest moral and historical interest is broken at frequent intervals by statistical and legal material, some of which, at least, makes hardly any pretence to be connected with the main body of the story. By far the largest part of the book comes from P, and most of it is very easy to detect. No possible doubt, e.g., can attach to i.–x. 28, with its interest in priests, Levites, tabernacle and laws. As significant as the contents is the style which is not seldom diffuse to tediousness, e.g., in the account of the census (i.), the dedication gifts (vii.), or the regulation of the movements of the camp by the cloud, ix. 15–23. Ch. xv., with its laws for offerings, sacrifices and the Sabbath, ch. xvii., with its vindication of the special prerogatives of the tribe of Levi, and chs. xviii., xix., which regulate the duties and privileges of priests and Levites, and the manner of purification, are also unmistakable. Chs. xxvi.–xxxi., as even the preliminary sketch of the book would suggest, must, for similar reasons, also have the same origin. To P also clearly belong xxxiii.

and xxxiv. with their statistical bent, and xxxv. and xxxvi. with their interest in the Levites and legislation. Besides these sections, however, the presence of P is certain—though not always so easily detected, as it is in combination with JE—in some of the more distinctively narrative sections, e.g. in the account of the spies (xiii., xiv.), of the rebellion against the authority of Moses and Aaron (xvi.), of the sin of Moses and Aaron, xx. 1–13, and of the settlement east of the Jordan (xxxii.). About such narratives as the death of Aaron, xx. 22–29, or the zeal and reward of Phinehas, xxv. 6–18, there can be no doubt.

With the exception of a few odd verses, all that remains, after deducting the passages referred to, belongs to the prophetic narrative (JE). The radical difference in point of style and interests between JE and P occasionally extends even to their account of the facts. The story of the spies furnishes several striking illustrations of this difference. In JE they go from the wilderness to Hebron in the south of Judah, xiii. 22, in P they go to the extreme north of Palestine, xiii. 21. In JE Caleb is the only faithful spy, xiii. 30, xiv. 24, P unites him with Joshua, xiv. 6, 38. In JE the land is fertile, but its inhabitants are invincible, in P it is a barren land. The story of the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram is peculiarly instructive (xvi.). It will be noticed that Dathan and Abiram are occasionally mentioned by themselves, *vv.* 12, 25, and Korah by himself, *vv.* 5, 19. If this clue be followed up, it will be found that the rebellion of Dathan and Abiram is essentially against the

authority of Moses, whom they charge with disappointing their hopes, *vv.* 13, 14. On the other hand, the rebellion headed by Korah is traced to two sources[1]: it is regarded in one of these as a layman's protest against the exclusive sanctity of the tribe of Levi, *v.* 3, and, in the other, as a Levitical protest against the exclusive right of the sons of Aaron to the priesthood, *vv.* 8–11. Perhaps the most striking difference between JE and P is in the account of the ark. In JE it goes before the camp, x. 33 (cf. Exod. xxxiii. 7), in P the tabernacle, to which it belongs, is in the centre of the camp, ii. 17, which is foursquare.

Much more than in Genesis, and even more than in Exodus have J and E been welded together in Numbers—so closely, indeed, that it is usually all but impossible to distinguish them with certainty; but, here, as in Exodus, there are occasional proofs of compositeness. The apparent confusion of the story of Balaam, e.g. (xxii.), in which God is angry with him after giving him permission to go, is to be explained by the simple fact that the story is told in both sources. This duplication extends even to the poetry in chs. xxiii. and xxiv. (cf. xxiv. 8, 9, xxiii. 22, 24).

There is not a trace of P in the Balaam story. All the romantic and religious, as opposed to the legal and theological interest of the book, is confined to the prophetic section (JE); and it greatly to be regretted that more of it has not been preserved. The structure of the book

[1] Two strata of P are plainly visible here: cf. p. 74.

plainly shows that it has been displaced in the interests of P, and from the express reference to the "ten times" that Israel tempted Jehovah, xiv. 22, we may safely infer that much has been lost. But what has been preserved is of great religious, and some historical value. Of course, it is not history in the ordinary sense: a period of thirty-eight years is covered in less than ten chapters (x. 11–xix.). But much of the material, at least in the prophetic history JE, rests on a tradition which may well have preserved some of the historical facts, especially as they were often embalmed in poetry.

The book of Numbers throws some light on the importance of ancient poetry as a historical source. It cites a difficult fragment and refers it to the book of the wars of Jehovah, xxi. 14, it confirms the victory over Sihon by a quotation from a war-ballad which is referred to a guild of singers, xxi. 27, it quotes the ancient words with which the warriors broke up their camp and returned to it again, x. 35, 36, and it relieves its wild war-scenes by the lovely Song of the Well, xxi. 17, 18. Probably other episodes in the books of Numbers, Joshua and Judges (e.g. ch. v.) ultimately rest upon this lost book of the wars of Jehovah. The fine poetry ascribed to Balaam, which breathes the full consciousness of a high national destiny, may belong to the time of the early monarchy, xxiv. 7, perhaps to that of David, to whom xxiv. 17–19 seems to be a clear allusion. The five verses that follow Balaam's words, xxiv. 20–24, are apparently a late appendix; the mention of Chittim in *v.* 24 would

almost carry the passage down to the Greek period (4th cent. B.C.), and of Asshur in *v.* 22 at least to the Assyrian period (8th cent.), unless the name stands for a Bedawin tribe (cf. Gen. xxv. 3).

Historically P is of little account. This is most obvious in his narrative of the war with Midian (xxxi.), in which, without losing a single man, Israel slew every male in Midian and took enormous booty. It is suspicious that the older sources (JE) have not a single word to say of so remarkable a victory; but the impossibility of the story is shown by the fact that, though all the males are slain, the tribe reappears, as the assailant of Israel, in the days of Gideon (Jud. vi.–viii.). The real object of the story is to illustrate the law governing the distribution of booty, xxxi. 27—a law which is elsewhere traced, with much more probability, to an ordinance of David (1 Sam. xxx. 24). From this unhistorical, but highly instructive chapter, we learn the tendency to refer all Israel's legislation, whatever its origin, to Moses, and the further tendency to find a historical precedent, which no doubt once existed, for the details of the legislation. It is from this point of view that the narratives of P have to be considered. The story of the fate of the Sabbath-breaker is simply told to emphasize the stringency of the Sabbath law, xv. 32–36, the particular dilemma in ix. 6–14 is created as a precedent for the institution of the supplementary passover, the case of the daughters of Zelophehad serves as a historical basis for the law governing the property of heiresses (xxxvi.). In other words, P is not a historian; his narrative,

even where it is explicit, is usually but the thin disguise of legislation.

As in Genesis and Exodus, almost every stage in the development of the religion of Israel is represented by the book of Numbers. Through the story in xxi. 4–11 we can detect the practice of serpent-worship, which we know persisted to the time of Hezekiah (2 Kings xviii. 4); and the trial by ordeal, v. 11–31, though in its present form late, represents no doubt a very ancient custom. P throws much light on the usages and ideas of post-exilic religion. But it is to the prophetic document we must go for passages of abiding religious power and value. Here, as in Exodus, the character of Moses offers a brilliant study—in his solitary grandeur, patient strength, and heroic faith; steadfast amid jealousy, suspicion and rebellion, and vindicated by God Himself as a prophet of transcendent privilege and power (xii. 8). Over against the narrow assertions of Levitical and priestly prerogative (xvi., xvii), which reflect but too faithfully the strife of a later day, is the noble prayer of Moses that God would make all the people prophets, and put His spirit upon them every one, xi. 29.

Deuteronomy

Owing to the comparatively loose nature of the connection between consecutive passages in the legislative section, it is difficult to present an adequate summary of the book of Deuteronomy. In the first section, i.–iv. 40, Moses, after reviewing the recent history of the people, and showing how it reveals Jehovah's love for Israel, earnestly urges upon them the duty of keeping His laws, reminding them of His spirituality and absoluteness. Then follows the appointment, iv. 41–43—here irrelevant (cf. xix. 1–13)—of three cities of refuge east of the Jordan.

The second section, v.–xi., with its superscription, iv. 44–49, is a hortatory introduction to the more specific injunctions of xii.–xxviii., and deals with the general principles by which Israel is to be governed. The special relation between Israel and Jehovah was established on the basis of the decalogue (Ex. xx.), and with this Moses begins, reminding the people of their promise to obey any further commands Jehovah might give (v.). But as the source of all true obedience is a right attitude, Israel's deepest duty is to love Jehovah, serving Him with reverence, and keeping His claims steadily before the children (vi.). To do this effectively, Israel must uncompromisingly repudiate

all social and religious intercourse with the idolatrous peoples of the land, and Jehovah their God will stand by them in the struggle (vii.). In the past the discipline had often indeed been stern and sore, but it had come from the hand of a father, and had been intended to teach the spiritual nature of true religion; worldliness and idolatry would assuredly be punished by defeat and destruction (viii.). And just as deadly as worldliness is the spirit of self-righteousness, a spirit as absurd as it is deadly; for Israel's past has been marked by an obstinacy so disgraceful that, but for the intercession of Moses, the people would already have been devoted to destruction,[1] ix. 1–x. 11. True religion is the loving service of the great God and of needy men, and it ought to be inspired by reverent fear. Obedience to the divine commands will bring life and blessing, disobedience will be punished by the curse and death, x. 12–xi.

This hortatory introduction is succeeded by the specific laws which form the main body of the book (xii.–xxvi., xxviii.). Roughly they may be classified as affecting (*a*) religious (xii.–xvi.), (*b*) civil (xvii.–xx.), and (*c*) social (xxi.–xxv.) life, the religious being made the basis of the other two.

(*a*) As the true worship is jeopardized by a multiplicity of sanctuaries, these sanctuaries are declared illegal, and their paraphernalia are to be destroyed; worship is to be confined henceforth to one sanctuary (xii.), and every idolatrous person and influence are

[1] Ch. x. 6–9 is an interpolation; *vv.* 6, 7 a fragment of an itinerary relating the death of Aaron, and *vv.* 8, 9 the separation of the tribe of Levi to priestly functions.

to be exterminated (xiii.). The holiness of the people is to be maintained by their abstaining from the flesh of certain prohibited animals [1] xiv. 1–21, and the sacred dues such as the tithes, xiv. 22–29, and firstlings, xv. 19–23, are regulated. Religion is to express itself in generous consideration for the poor and the slave, xv. 1–18, as well as in the three annual pilgrimages to celebrate the passover, the feast of weeks, and the feast of booths, xvi. 1–17.

(*b*) Besides the local courts there is to be a supreme central tribunal, xvi. 18–20, xvii. 8–13. No idolatrous symbols are to be used in the Jehovah worship; idolatry is to be punished with death, xvi. 21–xvii. 7. The character and duties of the king are defined, and his obligation to rule in accordance with the spirit of Israel's religion, xvii. 14–20; the revenues and privileges of the Levitical priests are regulated and the high position and function of the prophets are defined in opposition to the representatives of superstition in heathen religion (xviii.). Following the laws affecting the officers of the theocracy are laws—which finely temper justice with mercy—concerning homicide, murder and false witness [2] (xix.). A similar combination of humanity and sternness is illustrated by the laws—whether practicable or not—regulating the usages of war, xx., with which may be taken xxi. 10–14.

[1] This section is not altogether in the spirit of Deut. and is found with variations in Lev. xi. If it is not a late insertion in Deut. from Lev., probably both have borrowed it from an older code.

[2] Kindred in theme is xxi. 1–9, dealing with the expiation of an uncertain murder.

(*c*) The laws in xxi–xxv. are of a more miscellaneous nature and deal with various phases of domestic and social life—such as the punishment of the unfilial son, the duty of neighbourliness, the protection of mother-birds, the duty of taking precautions in building, the rights of a husband, the punishment of adultery and seduction, the exclusion of certain classes from the privilege of worship, the cleanliness of the camp, the duty of humanity to a runaway slave, the prohibition of religious prostitution, the regulation of divorce, the duty of humanity to the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, and of kindness to animals, the duty of a surviving brother to marry his brother's childless widow, the prohibition of immodesty, etc.

By two simple ceremonies, one of thanksgiving, the other a confession of faith, Israel acknowledges her obligations to Jehovah [1] (xxvi.), and the great speech ends with a very impressive peroration in which blessings of many kinds are promised to obedience, while, with a much greater elaboration of detail, disaster is announced as the penalty of disobedience (xxviii.). In chs. xxix., xxx., which are of a supplementary nature, Moses briefly reminds the people of the goodness of their God, and warns them of the disaster into which infidelity will plunge them, though—so gracious is Jehovah—penitence will be followed by restoration. In a

[1] Ch. xxvii., which, besides being in the 3rd person, interrupts the connection between xxvi. and xxviii., can hardly have formed part of the original book. It prescribes the inscription of the law on stones, its ratification by the people, and the curses to be uttered by the Levites.

powerful conclusion he sets before them life and death as the recompense of obedience and disobedience, and pleads with them to choose life.

The speeches are over, and the narrative of the Pentateuch is resumed. In a few parting words, Moses encourages the people and his successor Joshua, who, in xxxi. 14, 15, 23, receives his divine commission, and finally gives instructions for the reading of the law every seven years, xxxi. 1–13. Verses 16–30 (except 23) constitute the preface to the fine poem known as the *Song of Moses*, xxxii. 1–43, which celebrates, in bold and striking words, the loving faithfulness of Jehovah to His apostate and ungrateful people.[1] This poem, after a few verses in which Moses finally commends the law to Israel and himself receives the divine command to ascend Nebo and die, is followed by another known as the *Blessing of Moses* (xxxiii.). In this poem, which ought to be compared with Gen. xlix., the various tribes are separately characterized in language which is often simply a description [2] rather

[1] The song must be much later than Moses, as it describes the effect, *v.* 15ff., on Israel of the transition from the nomadic life of the desert, *v.* 10, to the settled agricultural life of Canaan, and expressly regards the days of the exodus as long past, *v.* 7. It is difficult to say whether the enemy from whom in *vv.* 34–43, the singer hopes to be divinely delivered are the Assyrians or the Babylonians: on the whole, probably the latter. In that case, the poem would be exilic; *v.* 36 too seems to presuppose the exile.

[2] These descriptions—to say nothing of *v.* 4 (Moses commended *us* a law)—are conclusive proof that the poem was composed long after Moses' time. Reuben is dwindling in numbers, Simeon has already disappeared (as not yet in Gen. xlix). Judah is in at least temporary distress, and the banner tribe is Ephraim, whose glory and power are eloquently described, *vv.* 13–17.

than a benediction, and the poem concludes with an enthusiastic expression of joy over Israel's incomparable God. The book ends with an account of the death of Moses (xxxiv.).

Deuteronomy is one of the epoch-making books of the world. It not only profoundly affected much of the subsequent literature of the Hebrews, but it left a deep and abiding mark upon Hebrew religion, and through it upon Christianity.

The problem of its origin is as interesting as the romance which attached to its discovery in the reign of Josiah (621 B.C.). Generally speaking, the book claims to be the valedictory address of Moses to Israel. But even a superficial examination is enough to show that its present form, at any rate, was not due to Moses. The very first words of the book represent the speeches as being delivered " on the other side of the Jordan "—an important point obscured by the erroneous translation of A.V. Now Moses was on the east side, and obviously the writer to whom the east side was the other side, must himself have been on the west side. The law providing for the battlement on the roof of a new house, xxii. 8, shows that the book contemplates the later settled life of cities or villages, not the nomadic life of tents ; and the very significant law concerning the boundary marks which had been set up by " those of the olden time," xix. 14, is proof con-

Levi appears to be thoroughly organized and held in great respect, *vv.* 8–11. The poem must have been written at a time when northern Israel was enjoying high prosperity, probably during the reign of Jeroboam II and before the advent of Amos (770 B.C. ?).

clusive that the people had been settled for generations in the land.

The negative conclusion is that the book is not, in its present form, from the hand of Moses, but is a product, at least several generations later, of the settled life of the people. But it is at once asked, Do the opening words of the book not commit us expressly to a belief in the Mosaic authorship, in spite of the resultant difficulties? Is it not explicitly said that these words are his words? The answer to this question lies in the literary freedom claimed by all ancient historians. Thucydides, one of the most scrupulous historians who ever wrote, states, in an interesting passage, the principles on which he composed his speeches (i. 22): "As to the various speeches made on the eve of the war or in its course, I have found it difficult to retain a memory of the precise words which I heard spoken; and so it was with those who brought me reports. But I have made the persons say what it seemed to me most opportune for them to say in view of each situation; at the same time I have adhered as closely as possible to the general sense of what was actually said." This statement represents the general practice of the ancient world; the conditions of historical veracity were satisfied if the speech represented the spirit of the speaker. And this, as we shall see, is eminently true of the book of Deuteronomy, which is an eloquent exposition and application of principles fundamental to the Mosaic religion. If, on the other hand, it be urged that the book contains deliberate assertions that it was written by Moses—e.g., "when Moses had made

an end of writing the words of this law in a book," xxxi. 24, cf. 9—the simple reply is that this very phrase, "all the words of this law," is elsewhere used of a body of law so small that it can be inscribed upon the memorial stones of the altar to be set up on Mount Ebal, xxvii. 3.

We are free, then, to consider the date of Deuteronomy by an examination of the internal evidence. The latest possible date for the book, as a whole, is determined by the story of its discovery in 621 B.C. (2 Kings xxii., xxiii.). There can be no doubt that the book then discovered by the priest Hilkiah, and read by the chancellor before the king, was Deuteronomy. It is called the book of the covenant (2 Kings xxiii. 2), but it clearly cannot have been the Pentateuch. For one thing, that was much too long; the book discovered was short enough to have been read twice in one day (2 Kings xxii. 8, 10). And again, the swift and terrible impression made by it could not have been made by a book so heterogeneous in its contents and containing romantic narratives such as the patriarchal stories. Nor again can the discovered book have been Exodus xxi.–xxiii., though that is also called the book of the covenant (Exod. xxiv. 7); for some of the most important points in the succeeding reformation are not touched in that book at all. It is clear from the narrative in 2 Kings xxii. ff. that the book must have been a law book; no other meets the facts of the case but Deuteronomy, and this meets them completely. Point for point, the details of the reformation are paralleled by injunctions in Deuteronomy—notably the abolition

of idolatry, the concentration of the worship at a single sanctuary (xii.), the abolition of witchcraft and star-worship, and the celebration of the passover. Some of these enactments are found in other parts of the Pentateuch, but Deuteronomy is the only code in which they are all combined. 621 B.C. then is the latest possible date for the composition of Deuteronomy.

It is possible, however, to fix the date more precisely. The most remarkable element in the legislation is its repeated and emphatic demand for the centralization of worship in "the place which Jehovah your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put His name there," xii. 5. Only by such a centralization could the Jehovah worship be controlled which, at the numerous shrines scattered over the country, was being stained and confused by the idolatrous practices which Israel had learned from the Canaanites. This demand is recognized as something new, xii. 8. In the ninth and eighth centuries, when the prophetic narratives of Genesis were written,[1] these shrines, which were the scenes of an enthusiastic worship, are lovingly traced back to an origin in patriarchal times. As late as 750–735 B.C., Amos and Hosea, though they deplore the excesses which characterized those sanctuaries, and regard their worship as largely immoral, do not regard the sanctuaries themselves as actually illegal; consequently Deuteronomy must be later than 735. But the situation was even then so serious that it must soon have occurred to men of practical piety to devise plans of reform, and that

[1] See pp. 71, 72.

the only real remedy lay in striking the evil at its roots, i.e. in abolishing the local shrines. The first important blow appears to have been struck by Hezekiah, who, possibly under the influence of Isaiah, is said to have removed the high places (2 Kings xviii. 4), and the movement must have been greatly helped by the immunity which the temple of Jerusalem enjoyed during the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib in 701 B.C. But the singular thing is that no appeal was made in this reformation to a book, as was made in 621, and as it is natural to suppose would have been made, had such a book been in existence. Somewhere then between Hezekiah and Josiah we may suppose the book to have been composed.

The most probable supposition is that the reformation of Hezekiah gave the first impulse to the legislation which afterwards appeared as Deuteronomy. But in the terrible reign of his son Manasseh, the efforts of the reformers met with violent and bloody opposition. Judah was under the iron heel of Assyria, and, to the average mind, this would prove the superiority of the Assyrian gods. Judah and her king, Manasseh, would seek in their desperation to win the favour of the Oriental pantheon, and this no doubt explains the idolatry and worship of the host of heaven which flourished during his reign even within the temple itself. It was just such a crisis as this that would call out the fierce condemnation of the idolatrous high places which characterizes Deuteronomy (cf. xii.) and create the imperative demand for such a control of the worship as was only possible by centralizing

it at Jerusalem. During this period, too, such a book may very well have been hidden away in the temple by some sorrowing heart that hoped for better days. It is improbable in itself (cf. xviii. 6–8), and unjust to the narrative in 2 Kings xxii., xxiii., to suppose that the book was written by those who pretended to find it. It was really lost; had it been written during the earlier part of Josiah's reign, there was nothing to hinder its being published at once. In all probability, then, the book was in the main written and lost during the reign of Manasseh (*circa* 660 B.C.). It has been observed that in some sections the 2nd pers. sing. is used, in others the pl., and that the tone of the plural passages is more aggressive than that of the singular; the contrast, e.g., between xii. 29–31 (thou) and xii. 1–12 (you) is unmistakable. We might, then, limit the conclusion reached above by saying that the passages in which a milder tone prevails probably came from Hezekiah's reign, and the more aggressive sections from Manasseh's.

This date agrees with conclusions reached on other grounds concerning other parts of the Pentateuch. The prophetic narratives J and E were written in or before the eighth century B.C., the priestly code (P) is, broadly speaking, post-exilic.[1] Now if it can be proved that Deuteronomy knows JE and does not know P, the natural inference would be that it falls between the eighth and the sixth or fifth century. But this can easily be proved, for both in its narrative and legislative parts, Deuteronomy rests on JE. As an illustration

[1] See pp. 72, 73.

of the former, cf. Deuteronomy xi. 6, where only Dathan and Abiram are the rebels, not Korah as in P (cf. Num. xvi. 12, 25); as an illustration of the latter, cf. the law of slavery in Exodus xxi. 2ff. with that in Deuteronomy xv. 12–18, which clearly rests upon the older law, but deliberately gives a humaner turn to it, extending its privileges, e.g., to the female slave.

Again in many important respects the legislation of Deuteronomy either ignores or conflicts with that of P. It knows nothing, e.g., of the forty-eight Levitical cities (Num. xxxv.); it regards the Levite, in common with the fatherless and the widow, as to be found everywhere throughout the land, xviii. 6. It knows nothing of the provision made by P for the maintenance of the Levite (Num. xviii.); it commends him to the charity of the worshippers, xiv. 29. Above all it knows nothing of P's very sharp and important distinction between priests and Levites (Num. iii., iv.); any Levite is qualified to officiate as priest (cf. the remarkable phrase in xviii. 1, "the priests the Levites"). Deuteronomy must, therefore, fall before P, as after JE.

A not unimportant question here arises: What precisely was the extent of the book found in 621 B.C.? Certainly the legislative section, xii.–xxvi., xxviii., possibly the preceding hortatory section, v.–xi., but in all probability not the introductory section, i. 1–iv. 40. These three sections are all approximately written in the same style, but i. 1–iv. 40 has more the appearance of an attempt to provide the legislation with a historical introduction summarizing the narrative of the journey from

Horeb to the borders of the promised land. Certain passages, e.g. iv. 27–31, seem to presuppose the exile, and thus suggest that the section is later than the book as a whole. The discrepancy between ii. 14, which represents the generation of the exodus as having died in the wilderness, and v. 3ff. hardly makes for identity of authorship ; and the similarity of the superscriptions, i. 1–5, and iv. 44–49, looks as if the sections i.–iv. and v.–xi. were originally parallel. Whether v.–xi. was part of the book discovered is not so certain. Much of the finest religious teaching of Deuteronomy is to be found in this section ; but, besides being disproportionately long for an introduction, it repeatedly demands obedience to the " statutes and judgments," which, however, are not actually announced till ch. xii. ; it seems more like an addition prefixed by one who had the commandments in xii.–xxvi. before him. Ch. xxvii., which is narrative and interrupts the speech of Moses, xxvi, xxviii., besides in part anticipating xxviii. 15ff., cannot have formed part of the original Deuteronomy. On the other hand, xxviii. was certainly included in it, as it must have been precisely the threats contained in this chapter that produced such consternation in Josiah when he heard the book read (2 Kings xxii.). The hortatory section that follows the legislation (xxix., xxx.), is also probably late, as the exile appears to be presupposed, xxix. 28, xxx. 1–3. On this supposition, too, the references to the legislation as " this book," xxix. 20, 21, xxx. 10, are most naturally explained.

The publication of the book of Deuteronomy was

nothing less than a providence in the development of Hebrew religion. It was accompanied, of course, by incidental and perhaps inevitable evils. By its centralization of worship at the Jerusalem temple, it tended to rob life in other parts of the country of those religious interests and sanctions which had received their satisfaction from the local sanctuaries; and by its attempt to regulate by written statute the religious life of the people, it probably contributed indirectly to the decline of prophecy, and started Israel upon that fatal path by which she ultimately became "the people of the book." But on the other hand, the service rendered to religion by Deuteronomy was incalculable. The worship of Jehovah had been powerfully corrupted from two sources; on the one hand, from the early influence of the Canaanitish Baal worship, practically a nature-worship, which set morality at defiance, xxiii. 18; and on the other, from her powerful Assyrian conquerors. Idolatry not only covered the whole land, it had penetrated the temple itself (2 Kings xxiii. 6). The cause of true religion was at stake. There had been sporadic attempts at reform, but Deuteronomy, for the first time, struck at the root by rendering illegal the worship—nominally a Jehovah, but practically a Baal worship—which was practised at the local sanctuaries.

Again Deuteronomy rendered a great service to religion, by translating its large spirit into demands which could be apprehended of the common people. The book is splendidly practical, and formed a perhaps not unnecessary supplement to the teaching of the prophets. Society needs to have its

ideals embodied in suggestions and commands, and this is done in Deuteronomy. The writers of the book legislate with the fervour of the prophet, so that it is not so much a collection of laws as "a catechism of religion and morals." Doubtless the prophets had done the deepest thing of all by insisting on the new heart and the return to Jehovah, but they had offered no programme of practical reform. Just such a programme is supplied by Deuteronomy, and yet it is saved from the externalism of being merely a religious programme by its tender and uniform insistence upon the duty of *loving* Jehovah with the whole heart.

The love of Jehovah to Israel—love altogether undeserved, ix. 5, and manifested throughout history in ways without number—demands a human response. Israel must love Him with an uncompromising affection, for He is one and there is none else, and she must express that love for the God who is a spirit invisible, iv. 12, by deeds of affection towards the creatures whom God has made, even to the beasts and the birds, xxv. 4, but most of all to the needy—the stranger, the Levite, the fatherless and the widow. Again and again these are commended by definite and practical suggestions to the generosity of the people, and this generosity is expected to express itself particularly on occasions of public worship. Religion is felt to be the basis of morality and of all social order, and therefore, even in the legislation proper (xii.–xxviii.), to say nothing of the fine hortatory introduction (v.–xi.), its claims and nature are presented first. The book abounds in profound and memorable

statements touching the essence of religion. It answers the question, What doth thy God require of thee? x. 12. It reminds the people that man lives not by bread alone, viii. 3. It knows that wealth and success tend to beget indifference to religion, viii. 13ff., and that chastisement, when it comes, is sent in fatherly love, viii. 5; and it presses home upon the sluggish conscience the duty of kindness to the down-trodden and destitute, with a sweet and irresistible reasonableness—"Love the sojourner, for ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt," x. 19.

Joshua

THE book of Joshua is the natural complement of the Pentateuch. Moses is dead, but the people are on the verge of the promised land, and the story of early Israel would be incomplete, did it not record the conquest of that land and her establishment upon it. The divine purpose moves restlessly on, until it is accomplished; so "after the death of Moses, Jehovah spake to Joshua," i. 1.

The book falls naturally into three divisions: (*a*) the conquest of Canaan (i.–xii.), (*b*) the settlement of the land (xiii.–xxii.), (*c*) the last words and death of Joshua (xxiii., xxiv.). This period seems to be better known than that of the wilderness wanderings, and, especially throughout the first twelve chapters, the story moves forward with a firm tread. On the death of Moses, Joshua assumes the leadership, and makes preparations for the advance (i.). After sending men to Jericho to spy and report upon the land (ii.), the people solemnly cross the Jordan, preceded by the ark (iii.); and, to commemorate the miracle by which their passage had been facilitated, memorial stones are set up (iv.). After circumcision had been imposed, v. 1–9, the passover celebrated, v. 10–12, and Joshua strengthened by a vision, v. 13–15, the people assault and capture Jericho (vi.). This initial

success was followed by a sharp and unexpected disaster at Ai, for which Achan, by his violation of the law of the ban, was held guilty and punished with death (vii.). A renewed assault upon Ai was this time successful[1] (viii.). Fear of Israel induced the powerful Gibeonite clan to make a league with the conquerors (ix.). Success continued to remain with Israel, so that south (x.) and north, xi. 1–15, the arms of Israel were victorious, xi. 16–xii.

Much of the land remained still unconquered, but arrangements were made for its ideal distribution. The two and a half tribes had already received their inheritance east of the Jordan, and the rest of the land was allotted on the west to the remaining tribes. Judah's boundaries and cities are first and most exhaustively given; then come Manasseh and Ephraim, with meagre records, followed by Benjamin, which again is exhaustive, then by Simeon, Zebulon, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali and Dan (xiii.–xix.). Three cities on either side of Jordan were then set apart as cities of refuge for innocent homicides, and for the Levites forty-eight cities with their pasture land, xx. 1–xxi. 42. As Israel was now in possession of the land in accordance with the divine promise, xxi. 43–45, Joshua dismissed the two and a half tribes to their eastern home with commendation and exhortation, xxii.

[1] The book of Joshua describes only the southern and northern campaigns; it gives no details concerning the conquest of Central Palestine. This omission is apparently due to the Deuteronomic redactor, who, in place of the account itself, gives a brief idealization of its results in viii. 30–35.

1–8. Incurring the severe displeasure of the other tribes by building what was supposed to be a schismatic altar, they explained that it was intended only as a memorial and as a witness of their kinship with Israel, xxii. 9–34.

The book concludes with two farewell speeches, the first (xxiii.) couched in general, the second xxiv. 1–23, in somewhat more particular terms, in which Joshua reminds the people of the goodness of their God, warns them against idolatry and intermarriage with the natives of the land, and urges upon them the peril of compromise and the duty of rendering Jehovah a whole-hearted service. The people solemnly pledge themselves to obedience, xxiv. 23–28. Then Joshua's death and burial are recorded, and past was linked to present in the burial of Joseph's bones (Gen. l. 25) at last in the promised land, xxiv. 29–33.

The documentary sources which lie at the basis of the Pentateuch are present, though in different proportions, in the book of Joshua, and in their main features are easily recognizable. The story of the conquest (i.–xii.) is told by the prophetic document JE, while the geographical section on the distribution of the land (xiii.–xxii.) belongs in the main to the priestly document P. Joshua, in common with Judges, Samuel (in part) and Kings, has also been very plainly subjected to a redaction known to criticism as the Deuteronomic, because its phraseology and point of view are those of Deuteronomy. This redactional element, which, to any one fresh from the study of Deuteronomy, is very easy to

detect, is more or less conspicuous in all of the first twelve chapters, but it is especially so in chs. i. and xxiii., and it would be well worth the student's while to read these two chapters very carefully, in order to familiarize himself with the nature of the influence of the Deuteronomic redaction upon the older prophetico-historical material. Very significant, e.g., are such phrases as "the land which Jehovah your God giveth you to possess," i. 11, Deuteronomy xii. 1 : equally so is the emphasis upon the law, i. 7, xxiii. 6, and the injunction to "love Jehovah your God," xxiii. 11.

The most serious effect of the Deuteronomic influence has been to present the history rather from an ideal than from a strictly historical point of view. According to the redaction, e.g., the conquest of Canaan was entirely effected within one generation and under Joshua, whereas it was not completely effected till long after Joshua's death : indeed the oldest source frankly admits that in many districts it was never thoroughly effected at all (Jud. i. 27–36). A typical illustration of the Deuteronomic attitude to the history is to be found in the statement that Joshua obliterated the people of Gezer, x. 33, which directly contradicts the older statement that Israel failed to drive them out, xvi. 10. The Deuteronomist is, in reality, not a historian but a moralist, interpreting the history and the forces, divine as well as human, that were moulding it. To him the conquest was really complete in the generation of Joshua, as by that time the factors were all at work which would ultimately compel success. The persistency of the Deuteronomic in-

fluence, even long after the priestly code was written, is proved by xx. 4–6, which, though embodied in a priestly passage, is in the spirit of Deuteronomy (cf. Deut. xix.). As this passage is not found in the Septuagint, it is probably as late as the third century B.C.

P is very largely represented. Its presence is recognized, as usual, by its language, its point of view, and its dependence upon other parts of the Pentateuch, demonstrably priestly. While in the older sources, e.g., it is Joshua who divides the land, xviii. 10, in P not only is Eleazar the priest associated with him as Aaron with Moses (Exod. viii. 5, 16), but he is even named before him (xiv. 1, cf. Num. xxxiv. 17). It is naturally also this document which records the first passover in the promised land, v. 10–12. The cities of refuge and the Levitical cities are set apart (xx., xxi.) in accordance with the terms prescribed in a priestly chapter of Numbers (xxxv.). The prominence of Judah and Benjamin in the allocation of the land is also significant. The section on the memorial altar, xxii. 9–34, apparently belonging to a later stratum of P, is clearly stamped as priestly by its whole temper—its formality, *v.* 14, its representation of the "congregation" as acting unanimously, *v.* 16, its repetitions and stereotyped phraseology, and by the prominence it gives to "Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest," *vv.* 30–32. That this document in Joshua was partly narrative so well as statistical is also suggested by its very brief account of Achan's sin in ch. vii., and of the treachery and punishment of the Gibeonites, ix. 17–21—an account which

may well have been fuller in the original form of the document.

The most valuable part of Joshua for historical purposes is naturally that which comes from the prophetic document, which is the oldest. It is here that the interesting and concrete detail lies, notably in chs. i.–xii., but also scattered throughout the rest of the book in some extremely important fragments, which indicate how severe and occasionally unsuccessful was the struggle of Israel to gain a secure footing upon certain parts of the country.[1] Many of the difficulties revealed by a minute study of i.–xii. make it absolutely certain that the prophetic document is really composite (JE), but owing to the thorough blending of the sources the analysis is peculiarly difficult and uncertain. That there are various sources, however, admits of no doubt. The story of the crossing of the Jordan in chs. iii., iv., if we follow it carefully step by step, is seen to be unintelligible on the assumption that it is a unity. In iii. 17 all the people are already over the Jordan, but in iv. 4, 5, the implication is that they are only about to cross. Ch. iv. 2 repeats iii. 12 almost word for word. In iv. 9 the memorial stones are to be placed in the Jordan, in iv. 20 at Gilgal. In vii. 25*b*, 26*a*, Achan alone appears to be stoned, in *v.* 25*c* the family is stoned too. A similar confusion prevails in the story of the fall of Jericho (vi.). In one version, Israel marches six days silently round the city, and on the seventh they shout at the word of Joshua ; on the other, they

[1] Cf. xv. 14–19, 63 ; xvi. 10 ; xvii. 11–18 ; xix. 47.

march round seven times in one day, and the seventh time they shout at the blast of the trumpet.

Enough has been said to show that the prophetic document, as we have it, is composite, though there can seldom be any manner of certainty about the ultimate analysis into its J and E constituents. There is reason to believe that most of the isolated notices of the struggle with the Canaanites scattered throughout xiii.–xxii. and repeated in Judges i. are from J, while ch. xxiv., with its interest in Shechem and Joseph, and its simple but significant statement, "They presented themselves before *God* (Elohim)," xxiv. 1, is almost entirely from E.

It used to be maintained, on the strength of a phrase in v. 1—"until *we* were passed over"—that the book of Joshua must have been written by a contemporary. But the true reading there is undoubtedly that given by the Septuagint—until *they* passed over—which involves only a very slight change in the Hebrew. On what, then, do the narratives of the book really rest? The answer is suggested by x. 12, 13, where the historian appeals to the book of Jashar in confirmation of an incident in Joshua's southern campaign. Doubtless the whole battle was described in one of the war-ballads in this famous collection (cf. Jud. v.), and it is not unreasonable to suppose that other narratives in the book of Joshua similarly rest upon other ballads now for ever lost. The capture of Jericho, e.g., may well have been commemorated in a stirring song which was an inspiration alike to faith and patriotism.

If, however, it be true that the book of Joshua

has thus a poetic basis, it is only fair to remember that its prose narratives must not be treated as bald historical annals; they must be interpreted in a poetic spirit. There is the more reason to insist upon this, as a later editor, by a too inflexible literalism, has misinterpreted the very passage from the book of Jashar to which we have alluded. What the precise meaning of Joshua's fine apostrophe to sun and moon may be, is doubtful—whether a prayer for the prolongation of the day or rather perhaps a prayer for the sudden oncoming of darkness. The words mean, "Sun, be thou still," and if this be the prayer, it would perhaps be answered by the furious storm which followed. But, in either case, the appeal to the sun and moon to lend their help to Israel in her battles is obviously poetic—a fine conception, but grotesque if literally pressed. This, however, is just what has been done by the editor who added x. 14, and thus created a miracle out of the bold but appropriate imagery of the poet. Similarly it is not necessary to suppose that the walls of Jericho fell down without the striking of a blow on the part of Israel, for this too may be poetry. It may be just the imaginative way of saying that no walls can stand before Jehovah when He fights for His people. That this is the real meaning of the story, and that there was more of a struggle than the poetical narrative of ch. vi. would lead us to believe, is made highly probable by the altogether incidental but very explicit statement in xxiv. 11, "The men of Jericho *fought* against you."

With its large geographical element the book of

Joshua is not particularly rich in scenes of direct religious value ; yet the whole narrative is inspired by a sublime faith in the divine purpose and its sure triumph over every obstacle. In particular, the story of the Gibeonites suggests the permanent obligation of reckoning with God in affairs of national policy, ix. 14, while Gilgal is a reminder of the duty of formally commemorating the beneficent providences of life (iii., iv.). The story of Achan reveals the national bearings of individual conduct and the large and disastrous consequences of individual sin. The valedictory addresses of Joshua are touched by a fine sense of the importance of a grateful and uncompromising fidelity to God. But perhaps the greatest thing in the book is the vision of the heavenly leader encouraging Joshua on the eve of his perilous campaign, v. 13–15, a noble imagination, fitted to remind those who are fighting the battles of the Lord that they are sustained and aided by forces unseen.

The Prophetic and Priestly Documents

Of the three principal documents, J, E and P, to whose fusion is due the account of Israel's origin and early history contained in the Hexateuch, nothing can be known except by inference; but within certain limits their date and origin may be fixed. In Genesis, J and E alike love to trace the sacred places of the Hebrews to some revelation or incident in the life of the patriarchs. Now from the prominence assigned to Hebron in J, together with the rôle assigned to Judah in the story of Joseph, xxxvii. 26, and the special interest in Judah displayed by Genesis xxxviii., it may be inferred that J originated in Judah; while the special attention paid in E to the sanctuaries of the northern kingdom, such as Shechem and Bethel, is not unreasonably held to imply that E originated in Israel.

It is impossible to assign more than an approximate date to the origin of these documents, but they can hardly be earlier than the monarchy, which is clearly alluded to in Genesis xxxvi. 31. Such incidental statements as that the Canaanite was *then* in the land, xii. 6, xiii. 7, imply that by the

author's time the situation had changed; and, as their subjection was not attained till the time of Solomon (1 Kings ix. 21) the documents can hardly be earlier than that. The sanctuaries glorified in the Pentateuch are the very sanctuaries at which a sumptuous but misguided worship was practised as late as the eighth century, in the days of Amos and Hosea (cf. Amos iv. 4; Hosea xii. 11); but, generally speaking, the conception of God found in the prophetic history, though as robust and intense as that of the early prophets, is more primitive. It is not afraid of anthropomorphisms (Gen. iii. 8; Exod. iv. 24), and theophanies, and it has not very clearly grasped the idea that God is spirit. On these grounds alone it would not be unfair to place the prophetic documents somewhere between Solomon and Amos. J probably belongs to the ninth century, and E, which, as we saw reason to believe, was later, to the eighth.

P takes us into a totally different world. The witchery of the prophetic documents has disappeared; poetry has given place to legislation, theophany to ritual, religion to theology. From the late historical books, such as Ezra-Nehemiah, we learn that legalism dominated post-exilic religion to an extent out of all proportion to what can be proved, or what is probable, for pre-exilic times; and it would be natural to suppose that another writing, such as P, dominated by precisely the same spirit, is a product of the same time. This supposition becomes a practical certainty in the light of two or three facts. Firstly, in not a few respects P is at variance with the legislative pro-

gramme drawn up by the exilic prophet Ezekiel (xl.–xlviii.). Now if P had been in existence, such a programme would have been unnecessary, and, in any case, Ezekiel would hardly have ventured to contradict a code which enjoyed so venerable a sanction and bore the honoured name of Moses. It is easier to suppose that Ezekiel's programme is a tentative sketch, which was modified and improved upon by the authors of P. Again there was every inducement during and immediately after the exile to formulate definitely the ritual practice of pre-exilic times, and to modify it in the direction of existing or future needs. So long as the temple stood, custom could be trusted to take care of the ritual tradition, but the violent breach with their country and their past would impose upon the exiles the necessity of securing those traditions in permanent and accessible form. P is therefore referred almost unanimously by scholars to the exilic and early post-exilic age, and may be roughly put about 500 B.C.

The documents J, E and P, which, for convenience, we have treated as if each were the product of a single pen, represent in reality movements which extended over decades and even centuries. The Jehovist, e.g., who traces the descent of shepherds, musicians, and workers in metal to antediluvian times (Gen. iv. 19–22), cannot be the Jehovist who told the story of the Flood, which interrupted the continuity of human life. These distinctions are known to criticism as J^1, J^2, etc.; but, though they stand for undoubted literary facts, it is altogether futile to attempt, on

this basis, an analysis of the entire document into its component parts. The presence of several hands may also be detected, though not so readily, in E. Most scholars suppose J to precede E, but one or two reverse the order. The truth is that there are passages in J inspired by splendid prophetic conceptions, which must be later than the earliest edition of E; and the moment it is recognized that a long period elapsed before either document reached its present form, the question of priority becomes relatively unimportant.

P is even more obviously the result of a long process marked by repeated additions and refinements. Numbers xviii. 7, e.g., implies that ordinary priests might pass within the vail, whereas in Leviticus xvi. this is possible only to the high priest, and even to him only once a year. Exodus xxix. 7 represents only the high priest as anointed, Exodus xxviii. 41 the other priests as well. The section in Exodus xxx. 1–10 on the altar of incense must be later than the list in xxvi. 31–37, where it is not mentioned. The age, too, at which the Levites might enter upon their service appears to have been repeatedly changed; in Numbers iv. 3 it is put at thirty years, in viii. 24 at twenty-five (and 1 Chron. xxiii. 24 at twenty). All this only shows the unceasing attention that was paid by the priests to the problem of worship; and the length of the period over which this attention was spread may be inferred from the fact that, even in the third century B.C., as we know from the Septuagint, the Hebrew text of Exodus xxxv.–xl. was not absolutely fixed.

We may conceive the composition of the Pentateuch to have passed through approximately the following stages. Earliest of all and fundamental to all come the ancient traditions and the ancient poetry, such as the book of the wars of Jehovah, and the book of Jashar. Upon this basis, during the monarchy men of prophetic spirit in both kingdoms—not improbably at the sanctuaries—wrote the history of the Hebrew people. These documents, J and E, were subsequently combined into a single history (JE), possibly in the seventh century, though how long, if at all, J and E continued to enjoy an independent existence we have no means of knowing. During the exile, the book of Deuteronomy was added (JED). Its influence, as we have seen, is very prominent in Joshua, and occasionally traceable even in the earlier books (cf. Gen. xviii. 19, xxvi. 5). After the exile P was incorporated, and the Hexateuch had assumed practically its present form about the middle of the fifth century B.C.

Judges

For the understanding of the early history and religion of Israel, the book of Judges, which covers the period from the death of Joshua to the beginning of the struggle with the Philistines, is of inestimable importance; and it is very fortunate that the elements contributed by the later editors are so easily separated from the ancient stories whose moral they seek to point. That moral is most elaborately stated in ii. 6–iii. 6, which is a sort of programme or preface to iii. 7–xvi. 31, which constitutes the real kernel of the book of Judges—chs. xvii.–xxi., as we shall see, being a supplement and i. 1–ii. 5 an introduction. Briefly stated, the moral is this: in the ancient history, unfaithfulness to Jehovah was regularly followed by chastisement in the shape of foreign invasion, but when the people repented and cried to Jehovah He raised up a leader to deliver them. Unfaithfulness, chastisement; penitence, forgiveness. This philosophy of history, if such it can be called, had of course the practical object of inspiring the people with a sense of the importance of fidelity to Jehovah. Both the ideas and the phraseology of this passage, ii. 6–iii. 6, are unmistakably those of Deuteronomy: therefore

here, as in Joshua, we speak of the Deuteronomic redaction.

The moral expressed in the preface and repeated in a less elaborate form elsewhere, vi. 7–10, x. 6–16, is amply illustrated by the stories that follow—the stories of Othniel, Ehud, Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Jephthah and Samson. This does not exhaust the list of judges, but it exhausts the list of those whose stories are used to illustrate the Deuteronomic scheme. The story of Abimelech, e.g. (ix.), has no such preface or conclusion as these six have ; neither has the notice of Shamgar in iii. 31 ; the preface is also lacking in the very bald notices of the five minor judges, x. 1–5, xii. 8–15. It is clear, therefore, that they fell without the original Deuteronomic scheme ; but it is equally clear that the later editors of the book intended to represent the period by twelve judges, Abimelech being apparently reckoned a judge, though he is not called one. Another computation, which ignored Abimelech, reached the number twelve by adding Shamgar, iii. 31, whom a comparison of iii. 31 with iv. 1 shows not to have belonged to the original book ; the name was probably suggested by v. 6*a*.

Chs. xvii.–xxi., which consist of two appendices (xvii., xviii, the origin of the sanctuary at Dan, and xix.–xxi., the vengeance of Israel on Benjamin for the outrage at Gibeah), also clearly fell without the Deuteronomic redaction : the section is untouched either by the language or ideas of Deuteronomy. Further, these chapters are clearly out of place where they stand ; for, generally speaking, the order of the book is chronological, beginning with the death

of Joshua and ending with the Philistine invasion which lasted on into the days of Samuel, whereas both stories in the appendix refer to quite an early period, two of the characters named being the grandsons of Moses and Aaron respectively (xviii. 30, xx. 28).[1]

The introduction, i. 1–ii. 5, also plainly falls without the scheme, for the book proper, ii. 6ff., is a direct continuation[2] of Joshua xxiv. 27, and i. 1–ii. 5 really duplicates, in the main, accounts and isolated notices scattered through Joshua xv., xvi., xvii., xix. The incidents related in these chapters are assigned to Joshua's lifetime; the phrase with which the book of Judges begins—"It came to pass *after the death of Joshua*"—is clearly a later attempt to connect the two books, and inconsistent with ii. 6ff., which carries the story back to a period *before* Joshua's death.

The original book of Judges, then, as edited by the Deuteronomist, is represented[3] by ii. 6–xv., minus the notices of Shamgar, Abimelech and the minor judges. The moral pointed by the redaction, valuable as it may be, is not always suggested by the history. The redaction assigns the national misfortunes to idolatry, though only once is idolatry mentioned with reprobation in the ancient stories themselves, vi. 25–32. The redaction shows a

[1] In ch. xviii. 30 the word now read as Manasseh was originally Moses.

[2] Ch. ii. 6, 7 = Josh. xxiv. 28, 31; Jud. ii. 8, 9 = Josh. xxiv. 29, 30.

[3] Note that ch. xv. 20 was apparently designed to conclude the story of Samson, raising the suspicion that ch. xvi. (with a similar conclusion) was added later.

further indifference to history in giving a national [1] turn to the tale of apostasy and deliverance, whereas the original stories show that the interests are really not as yet national, but only tribal. The chronology of the book—which is also part of the redaction—with its round numbers, 20, 40, 80, etc., appears to contain an artificial element, and to form part of the scheme indicated in 1 Kings vi. 1, which assigns 480 years, i.e. twelve generations, to the period between the exodus and the building of the temple. Many considerations make it practically certain that the periods of the judges, which are represented as successive, were often really synchronous, and that therefore the period covered by the entire book is only about two centuries.

There is reason to believe that the original Deuteronomic book of Judges included the stories of Eli and Samuel, and ended with 1 Samuel xii. It is expressly said in Judges xiii. 5 that Samson is to *begin* to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and it is reasonable to suppose that the completion of the deliverance was also related; besides, Samuel's farewell address contains many reminiscences of the familiar formulae of the book of Judges (1 Sam. xii. 9ff.) and an appropriate summary of the teaching and some of the facts of that book (cf. *v.* 11). It is easy to imagine, however, why the stories of Eli and Samuel were ultimately separated from the book of Judges: partly because they were felt to be hardly judges in the old sense of defenders,

[1] Cf. iii. 12. The *children of Israel* did evil again in the sight of Jehovah, and Jehovah strengthened Eglon the King of Moab against *Israel*; so *vv.* 14, 15, etc.

deliverers—Eli was a priest, and Samuel a prophet—and still more because the story of Samuel, at any rate, was bound up with the history of the monarchy.

The book received its present form from post-exilic redactors. This is rendered certain by the unmistakable marks of the influence of the priestly code in chs. xx., xxi. The unanimity with which Israel acts, the extraordinarily high numbers,[1] the prominence of such words as "congregation," constitute indubitable evidence of a priestly hand. Some post-Deuteronomic hand, if not this same one,[2] added the other appendix, xvii., xviii., the introduction, i.–ii. 5, and the sections in the body of the book already shown to be late.[3] The motives which prompted these additions were varied. With regard to the minor judges, e.g., some suppose that the object was simply to make up the number twelve ; but generally speaking, the motive for the additions would be the natural desire to conserve extant relics of the past. The introduction and appendix, though added late, contain very ancient material. Many of the historical notices in ch. i. are reproductions of early and important notices in the book of Joshua, though with significant editorial additions, usually in honour of Judah ;[4] and the story of the origin of the sanctuary at Dan, with its very candid account of the furniture of the sanctuary and the capture of the priest, is

[1] Ch. xx. 2 (cf. Num. xxxi.). Contrast Jud. v. 8.

[2] Note the phrase in both stories. "In those days there was no king in Israel," xviii. 1, xix. 1.

[3] Shamgar iii. 31 ; Abimelech (ix) ; minor judges, x. 1–5, xii. 8–15 ; Samson (xvi.).

[4] Cf. ch. i. 8, which contradicts i. 21 ; and i. 18, which contradicts i. 19.

obviously very old. Doubtless also there is a historical element in xix.–xxi., though it has been seriously overlaid by the priestly redaction—possibly also in the notices of the minor judges.

This raises the question of the sources and historical value of the stories in the body of the book, which, as we have seen, are very easily separated from the redactional elements. Indeed, as those elements are confined to the beginning and the end of the stories, we may assume that the stories themselves were not composed by the redactors, but already reached them in a fixed and finished form. Further, it is important to note that, just as in the prophetic portions of the Hexateuch, duplicates are often present—very probably in the stories of Ehud, iii. 12ff., Deborah and Barak (iv.), Abimelech (ix.), and Micah (xvii., xviii.), but certainly in the story of Gideon [1] (vi.–viii.). According to the later version, Gideon is the deliverer of Israel from the incursions of the Midianites, and the princes slain are Oreb and Zeeb, vii. 24–viii. 3; according to the earlier version, viii. 4–21, which is on a smaller scale, Gideon, accompanied by part of his clan, takes the lives of Zebah and Zalmunna to avenge his brothers, whom they had slain. In the case of duplicated stories, the Deuteronomic redactors apparently found the stories already in combination, so that the original constituent documents must lie further back still. As the narratives, with their primitive religious ideas and practices and their

[1] In the story of Jephthah, ch. xi. 12–28, which interrupt the connexion and deals with Moab, not with Ammon, is a later interpolation.

obvious delight in war, are clearly the echo of an early time, we shall be safe in relegating the original documents, at the latest, to the eighth or ninth century B.C. It is a point on which unanimity has not yet been reached, whether these documents are the Jehovist and Elohist of the Hexateuch; but considering the fact that the older notices in i.–ii. 5, on account of the prominence of Judah and for other reasons, are usually assigned to J, and that some of the characteristics of these two documents recur in the course of the book, the hypothesis that J and E are continued at least into Judges must be regarded as not improbable.

Fortunately we are able in one case to trace the source of a story. The story of Deborah and Barak is told in chs. iv. and v. Ch. 5, which is so graphic that it must have come from a contemporary—one had almost said an eye-witness—is undoubtedly the older form of the story, as it is in verse. Partly on the basis of this poem ch. iv. has been built up, and the account of Sisera's death in this chapter, iv. 21, which differs from that in v. 26, 27, rests on a misunderstanding of the situation in v. 26. Here we see the risks which the ballads ran when turned into prose, but more important is it to note the poetical origin of the story. Probably ch. v. originally belonged to such a collection as the book of the wars of Jehovah or the book of Jashar, and it is natural to suppose that other stories in the book of Judges—e.g. the exploits of Gideon—may have similarly originated in war-ballads.

The religion of the book of Judges is powerful but

primitive. The ideal man is the ideal warrior. Grim tales of war are told with unaffected delight, and the spirit of God manifests itself chiefly in the inspiration of the warrior. Gideon and Micah have their idols. Chemosh and Dagon are as real, though not so powerful, as Jehovah. Unlike the redaction, the earlier tales are not given to moralizing, and yet once at least the moral is explicitly pointed, ix. 56ff. But elsewhere the power of religion in life is suggested, not by explicit comment, but rather by the naturalness with which every interest and activity of life are viewed in a religious light. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the priceless song of Deborah [1] (v.). Israel's battles are the battles of Jehovah; her triumph is His triumph. The song is inspired by an intense belief in the national God, but there was little that was ethical in the religion of the period. Jephthah offers his child in sacrifice. Jael is praised for a murder which was a breach of the common Semitic law of hospitality. By revealing, however, so candidly the meagre beginnings of Israel's religion, the book of Judges only increases our sense of the miracle which brought that religion to its incomparable consummation in the fulness of the times.

[1] The song is not necessarily and not probably composed by Deborah. In v. 12 she is addressed in the 2nd person, and *v.* 7 may be similarly read, "Till *thou*, Deborah, didst arise."

Samuel

ALIKE from the literary and the historical point of view, the book [1] of Samuel stands midway between the book of Judges and the book of Kings. As we have already seen, the Deuteronomic book of Judges in all probability ran into Samuel and ended in ch. xii. ; while the story of David, begun in Samuel, embraces the first two chapters of the first book of Kings. The book of Samuel is not very happily named, as much of it is devoted to Saul and the greater part to David ; yet it is not altogether inappropriate, as Samuel had much to do with the founding of the monarchy. The Jewish tradition that Samuel was the author of the book is, of course, a palpable fiction, as the story is carried beyond his death.

The book deals with the establishment of the monarchy. Its ultimate analysis is very difficult ; but, if we regard the summary notices in 1 Samuel xiv. 47–51 and 2 Samuel viii. as the conclusion of sections—and this seems to have been their original intention—the broad outlines are clear enough, and the book may be divided into three parts : the first (1 Sam. i.–xiv.) dealing with Samuel and Saul, the

[1] Two books in the Greek translation, as in modern Bibles ; originally one in the Hebrew, but two from the year 1517 A.D.

second (1 Sam. xv.–2 Sam. viii.) with Saul and David, and the third (2 Sam. ix.–xx., concluding with 1 Kings i., ii.) with David, xxi.–xxiv. being, like Judges xvii.–xxi., in the nature of an appendix.

The book opens in the period of the Philistine wars. Samuel's birth, call and influence are described (1 Sam. i.–iii.), and the disastrous defeat which Israel suffered at the hand of the Philistines. Jehovah, however, asserted His dignity, and the ark, which had been captured, was restored to Israel (iv.–vii.). But the peril had taught Israel her need of a king, and, by a providential course of events, Saul becomes the chosen man. He gains initial successes (viii.–xiv.).

But, for a certain disobedience and impetuosity, his rejection by God is pronounced by Samuel, and David steps upon the arena of history as the coming king. His successes in war stung the melancholy Saul, who at first had loved him, into jealousy ; and the tragedy of Saul's life deepens. Recognizing in the versatile David his almost certain successor, he seeks in various ways to compass his destruction, but more than once David repays his malice with generosity. Saul's persecution, however, is so persistent that David is compelled to flee, and he takes refuge with his country's enemy, the Philistine king of Gath. At the decisive battle between Israel and the Philistines on Gilboa, Saul perishes. Soon afterwards, David is made king of Judah ; and emerging successfully from the subsequent struggle with Saul's surviving son, he becomes king over all Israel, seizes Jerusalem, and makes it his civil and religious capital (1 Sam. xv.–2 Sam. viii.).

The story of his reign is told with great power and candour, and is full of the most diverse interest—his guilty passion for Bathsheba, which left its trail of sorrow over all his subsequent career, the dissensions in the royal family, the unsuccessful rebellion of his son Absalom, the strife between Israel and Judah (2 Sam. ix.–xx.). The story is concluded in 1 Kings i., ii., by an account of the intrigue which secured the succession of Solomon, and finally by the death and testament of David. The appendix, which interrupts the story and closes the book of Samuel (xxi.–xxiv.) consists of (*a*) two narratives, with a dominant religious interest, which chronologically appear to belong to the beginning of David's reign—the atonement by which Jehovah's anger, expressed in famine, was turned away from the land, xxi. 1–14, and the plague which, as a divine penalty, followed David's census of the people (xxiv.); (*b*) two psalms—a song of gratitude for God's gracious deliverances (xxii. = Ps. xviii.), and a brief psalm expressing confidence in the triumph of justice, xxiii. 1–7; (*c*) two lists of David's heroes and their deeds, xxi. 15–22, xxiii. 8–39.

In the book of Samuel, even more distinctly than in the Hexateuch, composite authorship is apparent. Little or no attempt has been made by the redactor [1] to reduce, by omissions, adaptations, or corrections, the divergent sources to a unity, so that we are in the singularly fortunate position of possessing information which is exceedingly early, and in some

[1] "Come and let us *renew* the kingdom," 1 Sam. xi. 14, is a redactional attempt to reconcile the two stories of the origin of the monarchy.

cases all but contemporary, of persons, events and movements, which exercised the profoundest influence on the subsequent history of Israel. The book has been touched in a very few places by the Deuteronomic redactor—not to anything like the same extent as Judges or Kings. The few points at which he intervenes, however, are very significant; his hand is apparent in the threat of doom pronounced upon Eli's house (1 Sam. ii. 27–36)[1], in the account of the decisive battle against the Philistines represented as won for Israel by Samuel's intercession (1 Sam. vii. 3–16), in Samuel's farewell address to the people (1 Sam. xii.) and—most important of all—in Nathan's announcement to David of the perpetuity of his dynasty (2 Sam. vii.). A study of these passages reveals the didactic interest so characteristic of the redactors.

Such a book as Samuel offered little opportunity for a priestly redaction, but it has been touched here and there by a priestly hand, as we see from 1 Samuel vi. 15, with its belated introduction of the Levites to do what had been done already, *v.* 14, and from the very significant substitution of "all the Levites" for "Abiathar" in 2 Samuel xv. 24, cf. 29.

The composite quality of the book of Samuel could hardly fail to strike even a careless observer. Many of the events, both important and unimportant, are related twice under circumstances which render it practically impossible that two different incidents are recorded. Two explanations are given, e.g., of the origin of the saying, "Is Saul also among the

[1] Cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 9; Deut. xviii. 6–8.

prophets ? " 1 Sam. x. 11, xix. 24. Similarly, the story of David's magnanimity in sparing Saul's life is twice told (1 Sam. xxiv., xxvi.), and there is no allusion in the second narrative to the first, such as would be natural, if not necessary, on the assumption that the occasions were really different. There are also two accounts of David's sojourn among the Philistines and of his speedy departure from a situation fraught with so much peril (1 Sam. xxi. 10–15, xxvii., xxix.). Of course there are not unimportant differences between these two narratives : the voluntary departure of the one story becomes a courteous, though firm, dismissal in the other ; but in the light of so many other unmistakable duplicates, it is hard to believe that these are not simply different versions of the same story. There are two accounts of the death of Saul : according to the one, he committed suicide (1 Sam. xxxi. 4), according to the other he was slain by an Amalekite (2 Sam. i. 10). The Amalekite's story may, of course, be fiction, but it is not necessary to suppose this.

The differences between the duplicate accounts are sometimes so serious as to amount to incompatibility. In one document, e.g., teraphim are found in the house of a devout worshipper of Jehovah, 1 Sam. xix. 13, in another they are the symbol of an idolatry which is comparable to the worst of sins, 1 Sam. xv. 23. Again, there is no reason to doubt the statement in the apparently ancient record of the deeds of David's heroes, that Elhanan slew Goliath of Gath, 2 Sam. xxi. 19. But if this be so, what becomes of the elaborate and romantic story of 1 Samuel xvii., which claims this honour for

David ? The difficulty created by this discrepancy was felt as early as the times of the chronicler, who surmounts it by asserting that it was the brother of Goliath whom Elhanan slew (1 Chron. xx. 5). Connected with this story are other difficulties affecting the relation of David to Saul. In this chapter, Saul is unacquainted with David, 1 Samuel xvii. 56, whereas in the preceding chapter David is not only present at his court, but has already won the monarch's love, xvi. 21. The David of the one chapter is quite unlike the David of the other ; in xvi. 18 he is a mature man, a skilled and versatile minstrel-warrior, and the armour-bearer of the king ; in xvii. 38, 39, he is a young shepherd boy who cannot wield a sword, and who cuts a sorry figure in a coat of mail. Many of these undoubted difficulties are removed by the Septuagint,[1] which omits xvii. 12–31, 41, 50, 55—xviii. 5, and the question is raised whether the Septuagint omitted these verses to secure a more consistent narrative, or whether they were wanting, as seems more probable, in the Hebrew text from which the Greek was translated. In that case these verses, which give an idyllic turn (cf. ch. xvi.) to the story of David, may have been added after the Greek version was written, i.e, hardly earlier than 250 B.C., and a curious light would thus be shed upon the history of the text and on

[1] The Greek text of Samuel is often of great value. In 1 Sam. xiv. 18 it preserves the undoubtedly original reading, " Bring hither *the ephod*, for he carried the ephod that day before Israel," instead of " Bring hither the ark of God " ; and in *v.* 41 the Greek version makes it clear that the Urim and the Thummim were the means employed to determine the lot.

the freedom with which it was treated by later Jewish scholars. Equally striking and important are the conflicting conceptions of the monarchy entertained in the earlier part of the book. One source regards it as a blessing and a gift of Jehovah; the first king is anointed by divine commission "to be prince over my people Israel, and he shall save my people out of the hand of the Philistines," 1 Sam. ix. 16; the other regards the request for an earthly king as a rejection of the divine king, and the monarchy as destined to prove a vexation, if not a curse (viii.). Centuries seem to separate these conceptions—the one expressing the exuberant enthusiasm with which the monarchy was initiated, the other—perhaps about Hosea's time (cf. Hosea viii. 4)—reflecting the melancholy experience of its essential impotence.[1]

These considerations suggest that at any rate as far as 2 Samuel viii.—for it is universally admitted that 2 Samuel ix.–xx. is homogeneous—there are at least two sources, which some would identify, though upon grounds that are not altogether convincing, with the Jehovist and Elohist documents in the Hexateuch. One of these sources is distinctly early and the other distinctly late, and the early source contains much ancient and valuable material. Its recognition of Samuel as a local seer willing

[1] If other proof were wanted that the book is not an original literary unit, it might be found in the occasional interruption of the natural order. 2 Sam. xxi.–xxiv. is the most extensive and obvious interruption. But 2 Sam. iii. 2–5 is also out of place, it goes with v. 6–16. So 1 Sam. xviii. 10, 11, which is really a duplication of xix. 9, 10 is psychologically inappropriate at so early a stage.

to tell for a small piece of money where stray asses have gone, its enthusiastic attitude to the monarchy, its obvious delight in the splendid presence and powers of Saul, its intimate knowledge of the ecstatic prophets, its conception of the ark as a sort of fetish whose presence insures victory—all these things bespeak for the document that relates them a high antiquity. The other document represents Samuel as a great judge and virtual regent over all Israel, it has a wide experience of the evils of monarchy, it idealizes David, and it regards Saul as a "rejected" man. It is possible that these documents, in their original form, were biographical—Saul being the chief hero in the one and David in the other. A biography of Samuel, which may or may not have included the story of the war with the Philistines (1 Sam. iv.–vii. 2), possibly existed separately, though in its present form it is interwoven with the story of Saul.

It would be difficult to overpraise the literary and historical genius of the writer who in 2 Samuel ix.–xx. traces the checkered course of David's reign. He has an unusually intimate knowledge of the period, a clear sense of the forces that mould history, a delicate insight into the springs of character, and an estimable candour in pourtraying the weakness as well as the strength of his hero. The writer's knowledge is so intimate that one is tempted to suppose that he must have been a contemporary; and yet such a phrase as "to this day," 2 Sam. xviii. 18, unless it be redactional, almost compels us to come lower down. Probably, however, it is not later than the time of Solomon, whose

reign appears to have been marked by literary as well as commercial activity.[1]

The last four chapters, which interrupt the main narrative, contain some ancient and some late material. The two tales, xxi. 1–14, xxiv., which have much in common, were preserved because of their religious interest; and although part of ch. xxiv. (cf. *vv.* 10–14) is in the later style, both stories throw much welcome light on the early religious ideas of Israel. Of the poems 2 Samuel xxii. in its present form can hardly be David's,[2] and the same doubt may be fairly entertained with regard to xxiii. 1–7. Even if *v.* 1 be not an imitation of Numbers xxiv. 3, 15, it is hardly likely that David would have described himself in terms of the last clause of this verse. The eschatological complexion of *vv.* 6, 7 also suggests, though perhaps it does not compel, a later date; further, it is not exactly in favour of the Davidic authorship of either of these psalms that they are found in a section which was obviously interpolated later.[3] On the other hand, there can be no reasonable doubt that the incomparable elegy over Saul and

[1] The Book of Jashar, whose latest known reference comes from the reign of Solomon (cf. p.102), is supposed by some to have been edited in that reign.

[2] See pp. 247, 248.

[3] The song of Hannah, 1 Sam. ii. 1–10, is proof that later editors inserted poems at points which they deemed appropriate. If the "anointed king," for whom prayer is offered in *v.* 10, be one of the historical kings, then the Ps. is pre-exilic; if the Messianic king of the latter days, post-exilic. But in neither case could the prayer be Hannah's, as there was no king yet. The clause in *v.* 5—"the barren hath borne seven"—suggested the interpolation of the poem at this point.

Jonathan in 2 Samuel i. 19–27 is David's. Poetically it is a gem of purest ray; but, though its position in the book of Jashar [1] shows that it was regarded as a religious poem, it strikes no distinctively religious note. The little fragment on the death of Abner, 2 Sam. iii. 33ff., is also no doubt his.

The book of Samuel offers a large contribution to our knowledge of the early religion of Israel. It presents us with a practical illustration of the rigorous obligations of the ban (1 Sam. xv.), of the effects of technical holiness (1 Sam. xxi. 4, 5), of the appearance of the images known as teraphim (1 Sam. xix. 13), of the usages of necromancy (1 Sam. xxviii.), of the peril of unavenged bloodshed (2 Sam. xxi.), of the almost idolatrous regard for the ark (1 Sam. iv.), of the nature of the lot (1 Sam. xiv. 41, lxx.), of the place of fasting and the inviolability of oaths (1 Sam. xiv.). To the student of human nature, the book is peculiarly rich in material. The career of David and still more that of Saul—David with his weakness and his magnanimity, and Saul, a noble character, ruined by jealousy and failure combined working upon a predisposition to melancholy—present a most fascinating psychological study. The ethical interest, too, though seldom obtruded, is always present. In the parable of Nathan, it receives direct and dramatic expression; but the whole story of David's reign is haunted by a sense of the Nemesis of sin.

[1] This may either mean the book of the upright or brave, i.e. the heroes of Israel, or it may mean the book of Israel herself.

Kings

THE book[1] of Kings is strikingly unlike any modern historical narrative. Its comparative brevity, its curious perspective, and—with some brilliant exceptions—its relative monotony, are obvious to the most cursory perusal, and to understand these things is, in large measure, to understand the book. It covers a period of no less than four centuries. Beginning with the death of David and the accession of Solomon (1 Kings i., ii.) it traverses his reign with considerable fulness (1 Kings iii.–xi.), then carries on the history of the monarchy in both countries from the disruption to the fall of the northern kingdom (1 Kings xii.–2 Kings xvii.), and traces the story of Judah from that point to the exile (2 Kings xviii.–xxv.).

During this period events of epoch-making importance in politics and religion were taking place. In it literary prophecy was born, trade and commerce arose with their inevitable cleavage of society into the rich and the poor, the northern kingdom disappeared as a political force, and many of her

[1] Originally and till 1517 A.D. Kings was reckoned in the Hebrew Bible as one book. The Greek translation reckons it as two books, which it entitles the third and fourth *books of the kingdoms*, the first two being represented by the two books of Samuel.

people were carried into exile. Judah was dominated in turn by Assyria and Babylonia, with the result that her religious usages were profoundly affected by theirs. But of all this we learn very little from the book of Kings. Most of what we do know of the inner history of the period comes from the prophets. To understand the state of society, e.g. in the time of Jeroboam II, we go not to the book of Kings but to Amos and Hosea.

Again the perspective is strange. It is not only that brief reigns like those of Shallum and Pekahiah (2 Kings xv.) are dismissed in a verse or two, but even long and very important reigns, such as that of Jeroboam II. (2 Kings xiv. 23–29). Omri, the father of Ahab, was, we know, a much more important person than the few verses devoted to him in 1 Kings xvi. 21–28 would lead us to suppose. The reign of Ahab himself, on the other hand, is dealt with at considerable length (1 Kings xvi. 29–xxii. 40), and Solomon receives no less than nine chapters (1 Kings iii.–xi.). The stories of Jeroboam I (1 Kings xii.), Hezekiah (2 Kings xviii.–xx.), Josiah (2 Kings xxii. ff.) are told with comparative fulness. Whenever the narrative begins to expand it is plain that the interest of the author is predominantly and almost exclusively religious; in other words, his aim is to write not a political, but an ecclesiastical history. This at once explains his insertions and omissions. Omri's reign was not marked by anything of conspicuous importance to religion, while it was under Ahab that the great struggle of Jehovah worship against Baalism took place. Solomon is of unique importance, as he

was the founder of the temple. Hezekiah's career touches that of the prophet Isaiah, while his reign and Josiah's are marked by attempts at religious reform. The author is writing for men who have access to records of the political history, and to these "chronicles of the kings of Israel and Judah," as they are called, he repeatedly refers readers who are interested in the political facts.

Finally, though some of the narratives—notably the Elijah group—are dramatic and powerful to the last degree, the book has not, generally speaking, that flexibility and movement which we are accustomed to look for in a modern historian. It has been artificially conformed to a scheme. The various kings are introduced and dismissed and their reigns are criticized, in set formulae, and these formulae are Deuteronomic. With the exception of Hezekiah, all the kings before Josiah are implicitly condemned for worshipping upon the high places; and the centralization of the worship at Jerusalem was, as we have already seen, the chief feature of the Deuteronomic legislation. The book of Kings, like Joshua, Judges and Samuel (in part), has been subjected to a Deuteronomic redaction, of which the most obvious feature is the summary notice and criticism of the various kings. This redaction cannot have taken place earlier than 621 B.C. (the date of the publication of Deuteronomy) nor later than 597 B.C., as the reference to the chronicles of the kings of Judah ceases with the reign of Jehoiakim, 2 Kings xxiv. 5. Parts of the book presuppose that the temple is still standing, 1 Kings viii. 29, and the exile not yet an accom-

plished fact. There was, however, a later redaction some years after the pardon of Jehoiachin in 561 B.C. (2 Kings xxv. 27), and sporadic traces of this are seen throughout the book, parts of which clearly imply the exile, 1 Kings viii. 46, 47, and the destruction of the temple, 1 Kings ix. 7, 8. These redactions are known to criticism as D and D^2 respectively.

On none of the historical books has the influence of Deuteronomy been so pervasive as on Kings. The importance of the Deuteronomic law receives emphatic reiteration, 1 Kings ii. 3, 4, ix. 1–9, and once that law is cited practically word for word, 2 Kings xiv. 6; cf. Deut. xxiv. 16. Naturally the affairs of the temple as the exclusive seat of the true worship receive considerable attention. This explains the elaborate treatment accorded to the reign of Solomon, who founded the temple, and to the description of the temple itself (1 Kings vi.); and on his prayer of dedication the Deuteronomic influence is very conspicuous (1 Kings viii.). It is also unmistakable in the chapter which concludes the story of the northern kingdom and attempts to account for the disaster (2 Kings xvii.). The chapter presents what may be called a Deuteronomic philosophy of history, corresponding to the scheme which is thrown into the forefront of the book of Judges (ii. 6–iii. 6). Traces of a hand that is still later than the second Deuteronomic redaction are to be found here and there in the book; e.g., in 1 Kings viii. 4, the Levites are a later insertion to satisfy the requirements of the post-exilic priestly law—the words are not supported by the Septua-

gint. Here we see the influence of the priestly point of view, but the traces are far too few to justify us in speaking of a priestly redaction; the course which such a redaction would have taken we see from the book of Chronicles. But that the book was touched by post-exilic hands is certain; 1 Kings xiii. 32 actually speaks of "the cities of Samaria," a phrase which implies that Samaria was a province, as it was not till after the exile.

It is fortunate that one of the longest, most important, and impressive sections of the book—the Elijah and Elisha narratives (1 Kings xvii.–2 Kings viii., xiii. 14–21)—has not been touched by the Deuteronomic redaction. The Elijah narratives not only recognize the existence of altars all over the land, 1 Kings xix. 10, but the great contest between Jehovah and Baal is actually decided at the sanctuary on Carmel, xviii. 20, a sanctuary which, by the Deuteronomic law, was illegal. Again, the advice given by Elisha to cut down the fruit trees in time of war, 2 Kings iii. 19, is in direct contravention of the Deuteronomic law (Deut. xx. 19). These narratives must precede the redaction of the book by a century and a half or more, and we have them pretty much as they left the hand of the original writers. A post-exilic hand, however, is evident in 1 Kings xviii. 31, 32*a*. To a later age, which believed in the exclusive rights of Jerusalem, the altar on Carmel, which was said to be repaired by Elijah, *v.* 30, was naturally an offence; so the repairing of this old altar is represented as the erection of a new and special one, typical of the

unity of Israel. The lateness of the insertion is further proved by its containing a quotation from P (Gen. xxxv. 10).

As the book was redacted by Judean writers, it is not unnatural that the summary notices of the kings of Judah are more elaborate than those of Israel. In the former case, but not in the latter, the age of the king at his accession and the name of his mother are mentioned. One curious feature of these notices is that the statement of a king's accession, whether in Israel or Judah, is always accompanied by a statement of the corresponding year in the contemporary reign of the sister kingdom. The notices conform to this type: "In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam, king of Israel, began Azariah, son of Amaziah, king of Judah, to reign," 2 Kings xv. 1. It is practically certain that these synchronisms, as they are called, are not contemporary but the work of the redactors. There is no reason to suppose that the kings of either country would have dated their own reigns with reference to the other; besides, the synchronisms do not strictly agree with the other chronological notices of the reigns. The period between the division of the kingdoms and the fall of Samaria is estimated as 260 years in the story of the kings of Judah, but only as 242 in the case of Israel. Probably the original documents contained the number of years in the reign, and the dates of the more important events; but the synchronisms represent an artificial scheme created by the redactor. Traces of such a system are present in 1 Kings vi. 1, according to which 480 years, i.e. twelve generations

of forty years each, elapsed between the exodus and the building of the temple.

So much for the redaction; what, then, were the sources of the redaction? Three are expressly mentioned—the book of the acts of Solomon, 1 Kings xi. 41, the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel, and the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah. The nature of these books may be inferred, partly from the facts recorded in our book of Kings, and especially from the facts in support of which they are cited. They seem to have contained, e.g., accounts of wars, conquests, conspiracies, buildings, 1 Kings xiv. 19, xv. 23, xvi. 20, but it is not probable that they were official annals. There was indeed a court official whose name is sometimes translated "the recorder," 2 Sam. viii. 16, 1 Kings iv. 3. But besides the probable inaccuracy of this translation,[1] it is very unlikely that, in the northern kingdom at any rate, with its frequent revolutions, court annals were continuously kept; the annalist could hardly have recorded the questionable steps by which his monarch often succeeded to the throne, though doubtless official documents were extant, capable of forming material for the subsequent historian. But in any case, the chronicles to which the book of Kings refers cannot have been official annals; it is assumed that they are accessible to everybody, as they would not have been had they been official chronicles. They were in all probability finished

[1] The word strictly means "one who calls to mind," and would appropriately designate an official who brought the affairs of the kingdom before the king.

political histories, something like the elaborate section devoted to Solomon in our present book of Kings. The chronicles of the kings of Israel and Judah probably formed, not one book, as has been supposed, but two; the same event, e.g., the campaign of Hazael, is sometimes mentioned in two distinct and independent connections, 2 Kings x. 32, xiii. 3, cf. xii. 18f.—a fact which further suggests that the redactor treated his sources with at least comparative fidelity.

The book of Kings, as we have seen, concentrates attention almost exclusively on the religious elements in the history, and these were determined largely by the prophets. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of the longer sections deal with the utterances or activities of prophets at critical junctures of the history. The part played by Ahijah at the time of the disruption of the kingdom, by Elijah in the great struggle between Baal and Jehovah worship, by Elisha during the Aramean assaults upon Israel, by Isaiah at the invasion of Sennacherib—these and similar episodes are dealt with so fully as to suggest that biographies of the prophets, written possibly by literary members of the prophetic order, were at the disposal of the redactors of the book of Kings. Temple affairs are also discussed, from the days of Solomon to Josiah (1 Kings vi. vii., 2 Kings xi., xii., xvi., xxii., xxiii.), with a sympathy and a minuteness which almost suggest the inference that a regular temple history was kept; but occasional statements which are anything but flattering to the priests (2 Kings xii. 7, 15) render the inference somewhat precarious.

Besides the chronicles and biographies, there are hints that the redactors had access to other sources. The words in which Solomon dedicated the temple, only partially preserved in the Hebrew, are, by a very probable emendation of the Greek text, taken from the book of Jashar :—

> The sun hath Jehovah set in the heavens,
> He himself hath determined to dwell in the darkness.
> And so I have built Thee an house to dwell in,
> Even a place to abide in for ever and ever.
> (2 Kings viii. 12, 13 ; Septuagint, *v.* 53).

Again, 1 Kings xx., xxii. appears to come from a different source from the Elijah narratives in 1 Kings xvii.–xix., xxi. The former section takes a distinctly more favourable view of Ahab than the Elijah stories do, and, unlike them, it alludes to Ahab seldom by name, but usually as "the king of Israel" ; further, in it the great prophet of the period is Micah rather than Elijah. Both these groups of narrative belong no doubt to the northern kingdom.[1]

It is important to consider the value of the sources of the book of Kings. We have already seen that the redactor occasionally deals with them in a spirit of praiseworthy scrupulousness, repeating the same fact from different sources, and making no attempt to dovetail the one narrative into the other. Sometimes the sources have been demonstrably followed word for word, phrases like *to this day* being used of situations which had passed away

[1] Chs. xx., xxii. obviously so ; but no less xvii.–xix., xxi., for in 1 Kings xix. 3 Beersheba is described as belonging to Judah. A Judean writer would not have appended such a note.

by the time the book was redacted.[1] The facts, though lamentably meagre, have usually the appearance of being thoroughly trustworthy; the quotation from the book of Jashar is no doubt as genuine as it is interesting, and the brief account of the submission of Hezekiah to the tribute imposed by Sennacherib, 2 Kings xviii. 14–16, is supported by the Assyrian records. But it is evident that the history does not always rest upon contemporary sources, and that early events and personalities are touched with the colours of legend or romance. Much of the story of Solomon, e.g., is unmistakably historical—his luxury, his effeminacy, his commerce, his unscrupulousness. But there are stories of another sort which, on the face of them, must be decades, if not centuries, later than Solomon's reign. "There came no more," we are informed, "such abundance of spices as those which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon" (1 Kings x. 10). The age of Solomon is clearly long past, and his glory has been enhanced by the lapse of time; for "silver was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon," x. 21. Tales are told of his almost fabulous revenue, x. 14, which can hardly be reconciled with the story of his loan from Hiram, ix. 14. The story of Solomon is really a compilation, and its various elements are by no means all of the same historical value.

The career of Elisha is also seen through the colours of a rich and reverent imagination. It is,

[1] E.g., 1 Kings xii. 19 implies the existence of Israel, and 2 Kings viii. 22 (Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day) ignores the later conquest of Edom by Amaziah, xiv. 7.

in the main, intended to be a replica of Elijah's, and many of his miracles are obviously suggested by his. The story of Elisha's resuscitation of the dead child is an expansion of the similar story told of Elijah (2 Kings iv., 1 Kings xvii.), and his miracle wrought in behalf of the widow, 2 Kings iv. 1–7, is modelled on a similar miracle wrought by Elijah, 1 Kings xvii. 8–16. There is further an element of magic in his miracles which differentiates them from Elijah's, and throws them more upon the level of mediaeval hagiography; such, e.g., as the floating of the iron upon the water, or the raising of a dead man by contact with the prophet's bones. The Elijah narratives, on the other hand, represent a higher type of religious thought. The figure of that great prophet may also have been glorified by tradition, but in any case his was a personality of the most commanding power. He was indeed fortunate in his biographer; his story is told with great dramatic and literary art. In its account of the struggle with the greed of Ahab and the licentiousness of Baalism, it sheds a brilliant light upon one of the most crucial epochs of Hebrew history. Even this story, however, is not all of a piece. There is linguistic and other evidence that the chapter (2 Kings i.), in which two companies of fifty men are consumed by fire from heaven at the word of Elijah, is very late. In the story, which is rather mechanical and lacks the splendid dramatic power of the other Elijah stories, the prophet is only a wonder-worker, and his action is not determined by any moral consideration. It was not so much the spirit of Elijah himself, but rather

that of the late redactor, that Jesus rebuked, when He said to His disciples, who quoted the prophet's conduct for a precedent, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of."

Perhaps the chapter of least historical value in the book of Kings is that in which Jeroboam I is condemned and denounced for his idolatry at Bethel (1 Kings xiii.). It contains an unparelleled instance of predictive prophecy: Josiah is foretold by name three centuries before he appears, *v.* 2. The difficulty of this prediction is so keenly felt that one orthodox commentator feels constrained to dispose of it by assuming that the name is to be taken, not as a proper name, but in its etymological sense as one whom "Jehovah supports." The sudden withering of the hand and its equally sudden restoration to health are hardly more surprising than the definite prediction of the fate of the idolatrous priests, *v.* 2,—a prediction which appears to be fulfilled to the letter, 2 Kings xxiii. 16–18. But when we examine the account of the fulfilment, we find that the passage is later than its context [1] and inconsistent with it. The conduct of the "old prophet," whose lying counsel is attributed to an angel, is, morally considered, disreputable, and it is surely no accident that the man of God, whose message and fate are thus strangely told, is anonymous, though, as the opponent of the famous Jeroboam I, the leader of the disruption, he ought to have been well known. The vagueness and improbabilities of the story can only be accounted for

[1] Verse 16, in which the bones are burned on the altar, contradicts *v.* 15, in which the altar is already destroyed.

by its very late date. Fortunately we are able to show that the story is, at the earliest, post-exilic. As we have already seen, there is an allusion in *v.* 32 to the cities of Samaria, which implies that Samaria was a province, and stamps the passage at once as post-exilic. Even within the post-exilic period, it probably falls quite late—a precursor of the book of Chronicles. The historical spirit is in abeyance, and edification is the only consideration. The story is a late attempt to illustrate the great truth that God's word is immutable and must be uncompromisingly obeyed.

The religious value of the book of Kings is general rather than particular. There are individual sections of great religious power and value—most of all the great group of Elijah narratives ; but the book has been shorn, by the thoroughness of the redaction, of much that would have been of the deepest interest to the modern student of Israel's religious no less than political development. Taken as a whole, it has a certain melancholy grandeur. Beginning in the splendid glitter of Solomon's reign, the monarchy passed with unsteady gait across the centuries, menaced by foes without and within, and ended at last in the irretrievable disaster of exile. But through the sombre march of history, a divine purpose was being accomplished. The disaster which swallowed up the nation renewed and spiritualized the religion, and thus the seeming loss proved great gain.

Isaiah

Chapters I.–XXXIX

Isaiah is the most regal of the prophets. His words and thoughts are those of a man whose eyes had seen the King, vi. 5. The times in which he lived were big with political problems, which he met as a statesman who saw the large meaning of events, and as a prophet who read a divine purpose in history. Unlike his younger contemporary Micah, he was, in all probability, an aristocrat ; and during his long ministry (740–701 B.C., possibly, but not probably later) he bore testimony, as unremitting as it was brilliant, to the indefeasible supremacy of the unseen forces that shape history, and to the quiet strength that comes from confidence in God.

During this period three events stand out as of unique importance : the coalition—due to fear of Assyria—formed by Aram and Israel against Judah in 735 B.C. (vii. 1–ix. 6), the capture of Samaria by the Assyrians in 721 B.C., and the deliverance of Jerusalem in 701 B.C. from the menace of Sennacherib. In these and in all crises, Isaiah's message was a religious one, but instinct, as the sequel showed, with political wisdom. It rested ultimately upon the vision with which his ministry had been

inaugurated—the vision of the King, the Lord of hosts, upon a throne high and lifted up, whose glory filled the whole earth.

The King was "holy," partly, no doubt, in the ethical sense—for the man of unclean lips is afraid in His presence—but also partly in the older sense of being separated, elevated, lifted above the chances and changes of humanity. Holiness here is almost equivalent to majesty, it is the other side of the divine glory; and it is this thought that inspires the message of Isaiah with such serene confidence. His God is on the throne of the universe: He is the Lord of hosts. His purposes concern not only Judah, but the whole world, xiv. 26, and His kingdom must eventually come. Therefore it is that when, at the news of the confederacy of Aram and Israel against Judah, "the heart of Ahaz and his people shook as shake the forest trees before the wind," vii. 2, Isaiah remains firm as a rock; for, to paraphrase his own great alliterative words, "Faith brings fixity," vii. 9*b*. This word of his early ministry is also one of his latest (701): "he who believeth shall not give way," xxviii. 16. That is the precious foundation stone that abides unshaken amid the shock of circumstance, and can bear any weight that may be thrown upon it. This, then, is Isaiah's great contribution to religion: he is, before all things, the prophet of faith. "In quietness and confidence your strength shall be," xxx. 15.

It is easy from this point of view to understand the scorn which Isaiah heaps upon the common objects of men's trust, whether ships, walls or towers (ii.), lip-worship, xxix. 13f., or the gorgeous ser-

vices of the sanctuary, cunning diplomacy or the projected alliance with Egypt or Assyria (xxx.). Isaiah is the sworn foe of materialism : the contrast between human and divine resource is to him nothing less than infinite. " The Egyptians are men, and not God ; and their horses flesh, and not spirit," (xxxi. 3). It is in harmony with this insistence upon the supremacy of the spiritual that Isaiah regarded religion as separable not only from political form, but even from ecclesiastical organization ; for (if the text of viii. 16*b* can be trusted) he committed his message not to the contemporary church, but to a few disciples, transforming thereby the existing conception of the church, and taking a step of immeasurable significance for the development of true religion.

The majesty and originality of Isaiah's thought have their counterpart in his language. Very powerful, e.g., is his description of the Assyrian army—

> See ! hastily, swiftly he comes,
> None weary, none stumbling among them,
> The band of his loins never loosed,
> The thong of his shoes never torn.
> His arrows are sharpened,
> His bows are all bent.
> The hoofs of his horses are counted as flint,
> And his wheels as the whirlwind.
> His roar is like that of the lioness,
> And like the young lions he roars,
> Thundering, seizing the prey,
> And bearing it off to a place of security.
>
> v. 26–29.

The book is full of poetry as fine as this. Whether describing the mighty roar of the sea, xvii. 12–14, or

Jehovah's power to defend Israel, xxxi. 4, or singing a tender vineyard song (v.), Isaiah is equally at home. He effects his transitions with consummate skill: note, e.g., the swift application he makes of the parable of the vineyard, v. 5–7, or the scathing retort he makes to those who complain of the monotony and repetition of his message (xxviii. 11).[1]

The prophecies that fall within the first thirty-nine chapters are practically all on a very high religious and literary level; yet it is all but universally conceded that they are not entirely from the hand of Isaiah. Some prophecies, e.g. xiii., xiv., may be nearly two centuries later than his time, others, e.g. xxiv.–xxvii, four or six; indeed large sections or fragments of the book are relegated by the more radical critics to the second century B.C. and connected with the Maccabean times. But even the more conservative scholars admit that several oracles of Isaiah have been worked over by later hands, possibly by pupils, and that isolated sections, e.g. xxiv.–xxvii., have to be relegated to the post-exilic age, and even to a comparatively late period within that age. These questions can only be settled, if at all, by exegetical, theological and historical considerations, for which this is not the place; but in sketching the contents of the various prophecies, the more probable alternatives will be indicated, where a solution is important.

It is plain that the present order of the book is not strictly chronological; otherwise it would have

[1] The real irony of this passage, xxviii. 10–13, can only be appreciated in the Hebrew.

begun with the inaugural vision which now appears in ch. vi. Generally speaking, there are six more or less sharply articulated divisions in the first thirty-nine chapters, i.–xii., xiii.–xxiii., xxiv.–xxvii., xxviii.–xxxiii., xxxiv.–xxxv., xxxvi.–xxxix.

Chs. i.–xii. *Prophecies concerning Judah, Jerusalem (and Israel)*

The first division, like the fourth, deals in the main with Judah and Jerusalem. As the next division, xiii.–xxiii., deals with foreign peoples, i. 1 can serve as a preface only to the first division and not to the whole book. The prophecy opens with an arraignment of Judah, intensely ethical in spirit. It was placed here, not because it was first in point of time, but as a sort of frontispiece; for, though the different sections of the ch., e.g. *vv.* 2–9, 10–20, may come from different times, the first at any rate implies the ravaging of Judah, i. 7, and appears to point to the invasion of Sennacherib in 701 B.C.: it would thus be one of the latest in the book. The land is wasted, the body politic diseased, i. 1–9; the people seek the favour of their God by assiduous and costly ceremony, which the prophet answers by an appeal for a moral instead of a ritual service, *vv.* 10–20. But, as injustice and idolatry are rampant, they will be surely punished, *vv.* 21–31.

As a foil to this picture of the depravity of Zion, a foil also to the immediately succeeding description of her pride and idolatry, is the beautiful vision of Zion in the issue of the days, ii. 2–5, as the city to which all nations shall resort for religious instruction,

and their obedience to the expressed will of the God of Zion will usher in a reign of universal peace. The passage appears, with an additional verse, in Micah iv. 1–5, where it seems to be preserved in a more original form ; yet Isaiah can hardly have borrowed it from Micah, who was younger than he. It used to be supposed that both adopted it from an older poet. But the contents of the oracle, assigning as it does a world-wide significance to Zion, its temple, and its *torah*, while not absolutely incompatible with Isaianic authorship, rather point to a post-exilic date. We are the more at liberty to assume that the passage was later inserted as a foil to the preceding description of Zion as Sodom, as neither in Isaiah nor in Micah does it fit the context.

The general theme of ii.–iv. is the divine judgment which will fall on all the foolish pride of Judah. How it will come, Isaiah does not say—the prophecy is one of the earliest (735 ?)—but the storm that will sweep across the land will reveal the impotence of superstition and idolatry and material resources of every kind, ii. 6–22. All the supports of Judah's political life will be taken away : indeed, the leaders are either so weak or rapacious that the country is already as good as ruined, iii. 1–15 ; and the women, who are as guilty as the men, will also be involved in their doom, iii. 16–iv. 1. Strangely enough, this eloquent threat of judgment ends in a vision of comfort and peace, iv. 2–6. The land is one day to be wondrously fruitful, her people to be cleansed and holy, and the glory of Jehovah will be over Zion as a shelter and shade. The theological implications of this last passage seem late, and it was probably

appended by another hand than Isaiah's as a contrast and consolation.

Then follows a lament, in the form of a vineyard song, which skilfully ends in a denunciation of Judah, the vineyard of Jehovah, v. 1–7, merging thereafter into a sixfold woe, pronounced upon her rapacious land-holders, drunkards, sceptics, enemies of the moral order, worldly wise men, besotted and unjust judges, v. 8–24. This is fittingly followed by the announcement that Jehovah will summon against Judah the swift, unwearied and invincible hosts of Assyria, v. 25–30.

In the noble vision (740 B.C.) which inaugurated his prophetic ministry (vi.), Isaiah saw the glorious Jehovah attended by seraphim and received from Him the call to go forth and deliver his message to an unbelieving people. This vision appropriately introduces the prophecies proper in vii.–xii.; but it is practically certain that though the vision itself was early, the account of it is later. The hopelessness of his prospective ministry looks rather like the retrospect of a disappointing experience. Though Isaiah elsewhere expresses his faith in the salvation of a remnant, this chapter asserts the utter annihilation of the people, *vv.* 11–13*ab*. An attempt has been made to relieve the gloom in the last clause of the chapter, *v.* 13*c*, by a comparison of the stump of the tree that remained, after felling, to the holy seed; but this clause, which is wanting in the Septuagint, and utterly blunts the keen edge of the prophecy, is no part of the original chapter.

The next section, vii. 1–ix. 6, plunges us into the war which the allied arms of Aram and Israel waged

against Judah in 735, doubtless in the desire to force her to join a coalition against Assyria. Isaiah, vii. 1–17, seeks to reassure the faith of the trembling king Ahaz; and when Ahaz refuses to put the prophetic word to the test, Isaiah boldly declares that the land will be delivered from the menace before two or three years are over; and many a child—or it may be some particular child—soon to be born, will be given the name Immanuel, and will thereby bear witness to the faith that, despite the stress of invasion, God will not forget His people, but that He "is with us."[1] To the same period, but probably not the same occasion, belongs the prophecy of the devastation of Judah by Assyria, vii. 18–25. But the blow is to fall first, and within two or three years, on Aram and Israel, with their respective capitals. It did not fall so quickly as Isaiah had expected: Damascus was indeed taken in 732, but Samaria not till 721: in spirit, however, if not in the letter, the prophecy was fulfilled, viii. 1–4. The unbelief of Judah will also be punished by the hosts of Assyria, but the ultimate purpose of Jehovah will not be frustrated, viii. 5–10. He alone is to be feared, and no combination of confederate kings need alarm, viii. 11–15. The prophet commits his message to his disciples, and with patience and confidence looks for vindication to the future, viii. 16–18. Desperate days would come, viii. 19–91, but they would be followed by a brilliant day of redemption when Jehovah would remove the yoke from the shoulder of His burdened people by sending them a glorious prince with the fourfold name.

[1] vii. 8*b* is no doubt a gloss.

This latter prophecy, ix. 2–7, has been denied to Isaiah, but apparently with insufficient reason. The passage falls very naturally into its context. The northern districts of Israel (ix. 1) had been ravaged by Assyria in 734 B.C. (2 Kings xv. 29), and upon this darkness it is fitting that the great light should shine ; and the yoke to be broken might well be the heavy tribute Judah was now obliged to pay. There are undoubted difficulties, e.g. the mention of a Davidic king, ix. 7, after a specific reference to the fortunes of Israel over which the Davidic king had no jurisdiction ; and it is probable that we do not possess the oracle in its original form or completeness. But, in any case, the vision of the righteous and prosperous king ruling over a delivered people fittingly closes this series of somewhat loosely connected oracles.

The next section, ix. 8–x. 4, forms a very artistic whole, consisting of four strophes, each of four verses,[1] concluding with the refrain—

> For all this His wrath is not turned,
> And His hand is stretched out still.

The poem, which falls about 734, lashes the pride and ambition of *Israel* (not Judah) and threatens her people with loss of territory and population, anarchy and civil war. The passage was probably originally followed by v. 26–29, which has a similar refrain, and which, with its vivid description of the terrible Assyrian army, would form an admirable climax to this poem.

Chs. x. 5–xii. 6. Assyria, then, is the instrument

[1] Ch. ix. 8 is an introduction and *v.* 13 an interpolation.

with which Jehovah chastises Israel. But because she executes her task in a spirit of presumption and pride, she in her turn is doomed to destruction ; but the remnant of Jehovah's people will be saved, x. 5–27. The gradual approach of the Assyrians to Jerusalem is then described in language full of word-play, *vv.* 28–32, which forcibly reminds us of a very similar passage in Isaiah's contemporary Micah, i. 10–15. This chapter is probably about twenty years later than those that immediately precede it. There is an obvious advance in the prophet's attitude to Assyria, and the boast in *vv.* 9–11 carries the chapter later than the fall of Samaria (721) and Carchemish (717). It is even possible that the description of the Assyrian advance in *vv.* 28–32 implies Sennacherib's campaign in Judah in 701.

After the destruction of the enemy before Jerusalem in x. 33, 34 follows an enthusiastic description of the Messianic king—of his wisdom and justice, and of the universal peace which will extend even to the animal world, xi. 1–9. It is the counterpart of ix. 2–7, though here again, and perhaps with more reason, the Isaianic authorship has been doubted. The peculiar emphasis upon the equipment with the spirit is hardly, in these ethical relationships, demonstrably pre-exilic, and the " stem " out of which the shoot is to grow suggests that the monarchy had fallen, but the word may possibly be used to indicate its decadent condition. In any case, there seems very little doubt that the rest of the section, xi. 10–xii. 6, strikingly appropriate as it is in this place, is post-exilic. It describes how in the Messianic

days just pictured, the exiles of Israel and Judah will be gathered from the ends of the earth to their own land, where their near neighbours will all be vanquished, xi. 10–16. Then follows a simple song of gratitude for the redemption Jehovah has wrought, xii. The presuppositions of the dispersion here described are not such as fit into Isaiah's time; they would not even apply to the conditions after the fall of Jerusalem and the exile of Judah in 586, still less to the fall of Samaria and the exile of Israel in 721—the passage must be post-exilic. But though much later than Isaiah's time it forms a very skilful conclusion to the first division of his book, and is an admirable counterpart to the gloomy scenes of ch. i.

Chs. xiii.–xxiii. *Prophecies concerning foreign nations*

Chs. xiii. 1–xiv. 23. The Downfall of Babylon. The oracle concerning Babylon, the first of the series of oracles concerning foreign nations, is one of the most magnificent odes in literature. A day of destruction to be executed by the Medes is coming upon Babylon the proud (xiii.) and the exiles will return to their own land, xiv. 1–3. The triumph song that follows discloses a weird scene in the underworld, where the fallen king of Babylon receives an ironical welcome from the shadow-kings of the other nations. There can be no doubt that this prophecy is not by Isaiah. It glows with a passionate hatred of Babylon; but the Babylon which figured in the days of Isaiah (xxxix.) was only a province of Assyria, not an independent and oppressive world-power; nor would its destruction have meant the

return of the exiles of northern Israel. The situation is plainly that of the period during the later exile of Judah *before* the capture of Babylon by Cyrus in 538, as the horrors which the poet anticipated xiii. 15f.) did not take place.

In the spirit of ch. x., xiv. 24–27 proclaims the invincible triumph of Jehovah's purpose and the destruction of the Assyrians in the land of Judah. The assassination of Sargon in 705 B.C. was the cause of wild rejoicing throughout the western vassal states: the joy of Philistia is rebuked by the prophet in *vv.* 28–32 with the warning that worse is yet in store—an allusion, no doubt, to an expected Assyrian invasion. If this be the theme of the passage, *v.* 28 can hardly be correct, as Ahaz had died ten or twenty years before.

Chs. xv., xvi. Oracle concerning Moab. The subscription to this prophecy, xvi. 13, indicates that we have here an older prophetic oracle, given "heretofore." Strictly speaking, it is not so much a prophecy as an elegy over the fate of Moab whose land had been devastated by an invader from the north. The fugitives, arriving in Edom, send in vain for help to the people of Judah. Who the invader was it is hard to say—possibly Jeroboam II of Israel, whose conquests were extensive (2 Kings xiv. 25; Amos vi. 14). The oracle, besides being diffuse, is altogether destitute of higher prophetic thought, and is certainly not Isaiah's, though he adapted it to the existing situation and foretold a similar and speedy devastation of Moab, no doubt at the hands of the Assyrians, xvi. 14.

Ch. xvii. 1–11. This prophecy concerning Aram

and Israel falls, no doubt, within the period when these two countries were leagued against Judah, about 735. The doom of Aram is to be utter destruction ; that of Israel, all but utter destruction.

In the next two passages, xvii. 12–14, xviii., Isaiah appears to return to his favourite theme of the sure destruction of the Assyrians, though they are not mentioned by name. In xvii. 12–14 their hosts are compared to the noise of many waters, while in xviii. their doom is announced by the prophet in answer to an embassy sent by the Ethiopians, who were alarmed at the prospect of an invasion by the Assyrians, doubtless under Sennacherib.

Ch. xix. Oracle concerning Egypt. For Egypt the prophet announces a doom of civil war, oppression at the hands of a hard master, and public and private distress which will issue in despair, *vv.* 1–17. In their terror, however, the Egyptians will cry to Jehovah, who will reveal Himself to them and be in consequence honoured and worshipped on Egyptian soil. Then a triple alliance will be formed between Egypt, Assyria and Israel, and they shall all be Jehovah's people, *vv.* 18–25.

The dream of such an alliance is very attractive and not too bold for so original a thinker as Isaiah. But the passage is beset by difficulties. The attitude to Egypt appears to be much friendlier in *vv.* 18–25 than in *vv.* 1–17 ; and it seems quite impossible to find within Isaiah's age a place for five (= several ?) Hebrew-speaking cities in Egypt, *v.* 18, whereas such a reference would excellently fit the later post-exilic time when there were extensive Jewish colonies in Egypt. If the city specially mentioned at the end

of the verse be, as it seems to be, either Sun-city (Heliopolis) or Lion-city (Leontopolis) then it would not be unnatural to find, in the next verse, with its worship of Jehovah upon Egyptian soil, a reference to the founding of a temple at Leontopolis by Onias in 160 B.C. In that case, Assyria in *v.* 23 stands, as occasionally elsewhere, for Syria, from which Israel had suffered more severely during the second century B.C. than the earlier Israel from Assyria; and the dream of Palestine, Syria, and Egypt, united in the worship of the true God, would be just as striking and generous in the second century as in the eighth. At first, *v.* 19 seems to tell powerfully in favour of the Isaianic authorship, as the massebah (pillar) here regarded as innocent was proscribed a century after Isaiah by the Deuteronomic law (Deut. xii. 3). But the Egyptian Jews may not have been so stringent as the Palestinian, or we may even suppose that the "pillar" has here nothing to do with worship, but stands, for some other purpose, on the boundary line. There is no adequate reason, however, why *vv.* 1–17, or at least *vv.* 1–15, should not be assigned to Isaiah.

In ch. xx. (711 B.C., cf. *v.* 1, capture of Ashdod) Isaiah indicates in symbolic prophecy—which, however, was not fulfilled—that the people of Egypt and Ethiopia would be deported by the Assyrians. The prophet's object was to dissuade the people of Judah from the Egyptian alliance which they were contemplating.

The theme of xxi. 1–10 is the same as that of xiii., xiv.—the impending fate of Babylon—and the passages may be almost contemporary. Warriors

of Elam and Media are sent against Babylon, and the issue is awaited with tremulous excitement, till at last the watchman proclaims the welcome news, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." The importance here assigned to Babylon and her fall, the express mention of Elam and Media, *v.* 2, as her assailants, and the description of Jehovah's people as "threshed" point unmistakably to the last years of the exile, after the rise of Cyrus in 549, and before the fall of Babylon in 538, so that the passage cannot be from Isaiah. With this seems to go the next little enigmatic oracle concerning Edom, xxi. 11, 12, whose fate, as affected by the fall of Babylon, is as yet uncertain. The desert tribes, xxi. 13–17, will also be affected by the general upheaval and be driven from the regular caravan routes.

Ch. xxii. is the only chapter in this division (xiii.–xxiii.) which is not concerned with foreign nations. It probably owes its place here to its peculiar superscription which conforms to the other superscription in xiii.–xxiii. In this chapter the prophet laments and very sternly rebukes the frivolity of the people of Jerusalem—whether shortly before the invasion of Sennacherib or after his retreat, it is hard to say. Trusting in their armour and fortifications they give the rein to their appetites, but he solemnly declares that their sin will be punished with death.

Unique among the oracles of Isaiah are the two pieces, xxii. 15–18 and 19–25, which deal with persons. Shebna, one of the court officials and probably a foreigner, is threatened with exile and the consequent loss of his office: probably he championed

the policy of an Egyptian alliance. His place will be taken, according to Isaiah, by Eliakim, who, curiously enough, is threatened in his turn. Probably *vv.* 19–23 are an adaptation of 2 Kings xviii. 18, where Eliakim is holding an office here held by Shebna, while Shebna is only a scribe.

A prophetic lament over Tyre (xxiii.) concludes the oracles dealing with the foreign peoples. The glad ancient merchant city will be brought to silence, *vv.* 1–14, though after seventy years she is to be revived, and the proceeds of her traffic are to be enjoyed by the people of Jerusalem, *vv.* 15–18. There was a siege of Tyre during Isaiah's time, but it is probably not that which is celebrated here, as the poem lacks the nobility and grandeur of the prophet's style. If the oracle is held to imply the conquest of Tyre, it would require to be brought down to the time of Alexander the Great; but it may well be only an anticipatory lament and therefore earlier, contemporary perhaps with a similar oracle of Ezekiel concerning the siege of Tyre (Ez. xxvi.–xxviii.) Verses 15–18 are clearly dependent on Jeremiah's view of the duration of the Chaldean oppression (Jer. xxv. 11, xxix. 10); and the whole chapter may be exilic.

Chs. xxiv.–xxvii. *Late prophecy concerning the glorious issue of some world-catastrophe*

This section is very peculiar, obscure, and in the Old Testament altogether unique. Contemporary historical facts are seen now in the lurid light of fear, more often in the more brilliant light of eschatolo-

gical hopes. In ch. xxiv. a great catastrophe is impending. The world is weary, and joy has vanished. The city (Jerusalem ?) is desolate. Something has happened to revive Jewish hopes and kindle high expectations as to the issue of the coming calamity, but in the immediate future new woes are impending —the earth will reel ; on that day, however, Jehovah will suddenly punish the powers supernatural and terrestrial, and come down to reign in glory on Mount Zion. Then (xxv.) follows an enthusiastic song of praise, because a certain strong city (unnamed) has been laid low. A great banquet is prepared on Zion for all the sorrow-ridden nations of the world—emblem of their reception into the Kingdom of God—tears are wiped from every eye, and, with their reproach removed, the Jews praise their God for the victory. Another song of praise follows in xxvi. 1–xxvii. 1 for the power with which Jehovah has defended His own city, and laid her proud rival low. The wicked will not learn from the divine judgments ; but, while they are destroyed, not only do Jehovah's own people increase, but their dead are restored to life, to participate in His glorious kingdom ; and the dragon is smitten. Then follows xxvii. 2–6, a song of the vineyard—counterpart to v. 1–7—which praises Jehovah's care for Judah, with whom He is angry no more. Her rival shall become a desolation, but she herself shall be forgiven and re-established, if only she remove all signs of heathen worship, and from the ends of the earth her exiled sons shall gather to worship at Jerusalem.

The origin of this piece is wrapped in obscurity ; and it would seem that the author, for some reason,

deliberately concealed the historical situation. It is not even certain that the piece is a unity: the song, e.g., in xxv. 1–5 interrupts the description of judgment, and the connection is occasionally loose. There is no clue to what is meant by the strong city which is to be overthrown. It is plain, however, that the writer lived in Palestine, doubtless in or near Jerusalem, xxv. 6, 7, at a time when the Jews were scattered throughout many lands, xxiv. 14–16, xxvii. 12, 13, and when there were at least three great world powers, xxvii. 1. This could hardly have been earlier than the end of the Persian period, and probably the tidings that rang from the isles of the sea, xxiv. 14, 15, were those of the victorious advance of Alexander the Great. No earlier date would suit the theological implications of the passage: e.g. the judgment upon the hosts of heaven, xxiv. 21, 22 (cf. Dan. xi.), the resurrection from the dead, xxvi. 19, the banquet of the nations on Zion, xxv. 6. The style of the passage is nearly as peculiar as its thought, it abounds in assonance and alliteration. It is assigned by some to the close of the second century B.C.; but, in any case, it can hardly be earlier than the later half of the fourth century B.C., and may well express the wild expectations to which disappointed Jewish hearts were lifted by the conquests of Alexander.

Chs. xxviii.–xxxiii. *Prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem*

We now return to the undoubted prophecies of Isaiah. This group begins with a woe, xxviii. 1–4,

pronounced not long before the fall of Samaria in 721 B.C., ending in two verses, 5, 6, presenting another outlook, apparently by a later hand. In *vv.* 7–22, probably about the time of the Egyptian alliance, Judah is also threatened for the drunkenness of her leaders, and for the false confidence which leads the people scornfully to close their ears to prophetic instruction. The interesting little section which follows, *vv.* 23–29, shows how the farmer adapts his methods to the particular work he has to do. The connection, however, is anything but obvious: it may be intended as a reminder to the sceptics of Judah that the divine penalties, though slow, v. 19, are sure; or it may be meant to suggest that God's judgments are tempered with mercy. To the same period belongs the prophecy of the distress that is to be inflicted on Ariel, i.e. Jerusalem, by "a great multitude of all the nations," clearly Sennacherib's army, xxix. 1–15; but in a prophecy, probably much later, which is dramatically appended to it, a promise of redemption and restoration is held out, xxix. 16–24.

In xxx., xxxi., also before the invasion of Sennacherib, the prophet denounces the folly of trusting the impotent aid of Egypt, when their real strength lay in quietly trusting their God: for Jehovah will smite the Assyrian with a mysterious blow and defend his dear Jerusalem. Though such promises undoubtedly fall within the range of Isaiah's message, the ideas and the general tone of xxx. 18–26 are sufficient to place that passage almost certainly in the post-exilic period. Against the background of calamity in the two preceding chapters, xxxii. 1–8

throws up a picture—whether from Isaiah's or a later hand—of the Messianic age, when rulers would be just and character transformed. The imminent desolation of Jerusalem, with which the women are threatened, is again immediately contrasted with the fruitfulness and security of the land, when the spirit will be poured out from on high, xxxii. 9–20.

This group is closed by a song of triumph (xxxiii.) over the prospective annihilation of the foreign foes who have crushed Israel, by the glorious God who defends Jerusalem. There is much in the passage, especially towards the end, *vv.* 19–21, which looks as if the Assyrians were the enemy, and the prophecy, like most of those in this group, fell shortly before Sennacherib's invasion. But, besides lacking the vigour of Isaiah's acknowledged prophecies, the passage contains ideas which are hardly his: e.g. the sinners in Zion, *v.* 14, are not to be destroyed but forgiven, *v.* 24. The allusion to the king in *v.* 17, if the text is correct, helps us little, as the king may be Jehovah. There is a growing conviction that the passage is post-exilic, some scholars even bringing it down to the Maccabean times, about 163 B.C.

Chs. xxxiv., xxxv. *Prophecy concerning the redemption and return of Israel.*

A fitting conclusion to the whole book—ignoring xxxvi.–xxxix., which is an historical appendix—is afforded by the picture of the world-judgment, the redemption of Israel, and the destruction of her enemies in xxxiv., xxxv. Edom is singled out as the special object of Jehovah's vengeance, xxxiv.

5–17; and, in contrast to her desolation, is the blessedness of Israel, returning to her own land across the blossoming wilderness with exceeding joy. Ch. xxxv., at any rate, seems to point to the return of the exiles from Babylon, and ch. xxxiv. may also without violence be fitted into this time. The Jews never forgot or forgave the Edomites for their cruelty on the occasion of the destruction of Jerusalem (Lam. iv. 21ff., Ps. cxxxvii. 7) and the joy of their own redemption would be heightened by the ruin of Edom (Mal. i. 2–5). If, however, xxxiv. 16 implies, as we are not bound to believe, a fixed prophetic canon, the chapters would be very late, falling somewhere within the second century B.C. More probably they were written, like xiii., xiv., towards the end of the exile.

xxxvi.–xxxix. *Historical Appendix*

Separating the earlier from the later of the two great divisions of the book of Isaiah (i.–xxxv., xl.–lxvi.) stands a purely historical section, practically identical with and probably borrowed from 2 Kings xviii. 13–xx. 19, which finds its place here, no doubt simply because of its connection with the prophet Isaiah. It tells the story of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah, his insulting demands, whether transmitted through the Rabshakeh (xxxvi.) or by letter (xxxvii.), of Hezekiah's terror and Isaiah's divine word of reassurance, and of the ultimate departure of the Assyrian army. Ch. xxxviii. contains Isaiah's prophecy to Hezekiah of his recovery from sickness, with the king's song of gratitude. This is followed

by another prophecy of the Babylonian exile, occasioned by an embassy sent to Hezekiah by Merodach Baladan, king of Babylon (xxxix.).

This account omits the very important statement in 2 Kings xviii. 14–16 of the heavy tribute paid by Hezekiah to the King of Assyria, and inserts the psalm of Hezekiah, xxxviii. 9–20, which is no doubt later than the redaction of the book of Kings as it is not found there, and is, in all probability, a post-exilic psalm. It is not certain whether the accounts in xxxvi. 1–xxxvii. 9*a* and xxxvii. 9*b*–37 are simply parallel versions of the same incident, or refer to two different campaigns. In the distinctly prophetical portion, xxxvii. 22ff., though there is much that recalls Isaiah, the passage in its present form can hardly be his. Ch. xxxvii. 26, e.g. would be a pertinent appeal to Israel, but hardly to Sennacherib ; it rests, no doubt, on the later Isaiah (xl. 28, xlvi. 11). The prophecy of exile *to Babylon*, xxxix. 6, 7, is not natural at a time when Assyria, not Babylon, was the enemy. Again, xxxvii. 33, which denies that even an arrow would be shot, is hardly reconcileable with Isaiah's prophecy of an arduous siege for the city, xxix. 1–4. Further, the minute prediction that Hezekiah's life would be prolonged for fifteen years is not in the manner of Isaiah, nor indeed of any of the great prophets, whose precise numbers, where they occur, are to be interpreted as round numbers (e.g. seventy years in Jer. xxv. 11, xxix. 10) ; and the story of the reversal of the shadow on the sun-dial reflects the later conception of the prophet as a miracle-worker (cf. 1 Kings xiii. 3–6). The section, in its present form, must be post-exilic.

Chapters xl.–lv.

With ch. xl. we pass into a different historical and theological atmosphere from that of the authentic prophecies of Isaiah. The very first word, "Comfort ye," strikes a new note: in the main, the message of Isaiah had been one of judgment. Jerusalem and the cities of Judah are in ruins, xlv. 13. The people are in exile in the land of the Chaldeans, xlvii. 5, 6, from which they are on the point of being delivered, xlviii. 20. The time of her sorrow is all but over, xl. 2; and her redemption is to come through a great warrior who is twice expressly named as Cyrus, xliv. 28, xlv. 1, and occasionally alluded to as a figure almost too familiar to need naming, xli. 25, xlv. 13. He it is who is to overthrow Babylon, xlviii. 14. Such, then, is the situation: the exile is not predicted, it is presupposed, and the oppressor is not Assyria, as in Isaiah's time, but Babylon. Now it is a cardinal, indeed an obvious principle, of prophecy that the prophet addresses himself, at least primarily, to the situation of his own time. Prophecy is a moral, not a magical thing; and nothing would be gained by the delivery of a message over a century and a half before it was needed, to a people to whom it was irrelevant and unintelligible.

The literary style of these chapters also differs widely from that of Isaiah. No doubt there are points of contact, notably in the fondness for the phrase, "the holy One of Israel"—a favourite phrase of Isaiah's and rare elsewhere. The influence of Isaiah is unmistakable, but the differences are no less striking. Isaiah mounts up on wings as an

eagle : the later prophet neither mounts nor runs, he walks, xl. 31. He has not the older prophet's majesty ; he has a quiet dignity, and his tone is more tender. Nor has he Isaiah's exuberance and fertility of resource : the same thoughts are repeated, though with pleasing and ingenious variations, over and over again. All his characteristic thoughts already appear in the first two chapters : the certainty and joy of Israel's redemption, the omnipotence of Jehovah and the absurdity of idolatry, the call of Cyrus to execute Jehovah's purpose, the ultimate design of that purpose as the bringing of the whole world, through redeemed Israel, to a knowledge of the true God.

The theological ideas of the prophecy are different from those of Isaiah. Unique emphasis is laid on the creative power of Jehovah, and this thought is applied to the case of forlorn Israel with overwhelming effect ; for it is none other than the eternal and omnipotent God that is about to reveal Himself as Israel's redeemer, in fulfilment of ancient words of prophecy, xliv. 7, 8. This very attitude to prephecy marks the book as late ; it would not be possible in a pre-exilic prophet. But the most original conception of the book is one which finds no parallel whatever in Isaiah, viz. the suffering servant of Jehovah. This servant is the exclusive theme of the four songs, xlii. 1–4, xlix. 1–6, l. 4–9, lii. 13–liii. 12 ; but more or less he is involved in the whole prophecy. The function of the servant is to give light to the Gentiles—in other words, to bring the world to a knowledge of Jehovah (cf. xlii. 1, xlv. 14).

Who is the servant ? The difficulty in answering this question is twofold : (i.) while the servant is often undoubtedly a collective term for the people of Israel, xli. 8, xliv. 1, 2, the descriptions of him, especially in the songs alluded to, are occasionally so intimately personal as to seem to compel an individual interpretation (cf. liii.). But in this connection we have to remember the ease with which the Oriental could personify, and apply even the most personal detail to a collective body. "Grey hairs are upon him," says Hosea, vii. 9, not of a man but of the nation ; and Isaiah himself, i. 6, described the body politic as sick from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot (cf. Ezek. xvi., xxiii). Clearly, therefore, individual allusions do not necessarily compel an individual interpretation ; and there is no reason in the nature of the case, and still less in the context, to assume a reference to any specific individual. The songs are an integral part of the prophecy : the function of the servant is the same, and the servant must also be the same in both. Indeed one passage in the second song, xlix. 3, expressly identifies the servant with Israel ; and in liii., an intensely personal chapter, where the servant, after death, is to rise again and take his place victoriously in the world, the collective interpretation of the servant as Israel, emerging triumphantly from the doom of exile, is natural, if not necessary.

But (ii.) admitting that the servant is everywhere Israel, a new difficulty emerges. The terms in which he is described are often apparently contradictory. At one time he is blind and deaf, xlii. 18, 19 ; at another he is Jehovah's witness and minister

to the blind and deaf, i.e. to the heathen world, xliii. 8–10, xlii. 7. This contrast, which runs through the prophecy, is simply to be explained as a blending of the real and the ideal. The people contemplated are in both cases the same; but, at one time, the prophet contemplates them as they are, unreceptive and irresponsive to their high destiny; at another, he regards them in the light of that destiny—called, through their experience of suffering and redemption, to bring the world to a saving knowledge of the true and only God.

Chapters xl.–xlix. fall somewhere about 540 B.C.—between the decisive victories of Cyrus over the Lydians in 546 (cf. xli. 1–5) and the capture of Babylon in 538. The prophecy opens with a word of consolation. The exile of Judah is all but over, her redemption is very nigh; for the eternal purpose of Jehovah must be fulfilled, xl. 1–11. He is a God whose power and wisdom are beyond all imagining, and He will be the strength of those who put their trust in Him (xl. 12–31).[1] For He has raised up a great warrior from the north-east (cf. xli. 2, 25), i.e. Cyrus, through whom Israel's happy return to her own land is assured (xli. 1–20). Israel's God is the true God; for He alone foretold this day, as no heathen god could ever have done, xli. 21–29. The mission of His servant Israel is to spread the knowledge of His name throughout the world, and that mission must be fulfilled, xlii. 1–9. Let the world rejoice, then, at the glorious redemption Jehovah has wrought for His people, xlii. 10–17; for their

[1] Between xl. 19 and 20 probably xli. 6, 7 should be inserted.

sorrow, xlii. 18–25, and their redemption alike, xliii. 1–7, spring from a deep purpose of love. Israel is now fitted to be Jehovah's witness before the world, for her impending deliverance from Babylon is more marvellous than her ancient deliverance from Egypt, xliii. 8–21. Her grievous sins are freely forgiven, xliii. 22–28, and soon she shall enter upon a new and happy life, xliv. 1–5, for her God, the eternal and the only God,[1] forgives and redeems, xliv. 6–23.

The deliverance of Israel is to be effected through Cyrus, who is honoured with the high titles, "Shepherd and Messiah of Jehovah," xlv. 1, and assured by him of a triumphant career, for Israel and the true religion's sake, xliv. 24–xlv. 8. Those who are surprised at Jehovah's call of the foreign Cyrus are sternly reminded that Jehovah is sovereign and can call whom He will, xlv. 9–13, and the ultimate object of His call is that through the redemption of Israel, which he is commissioned to effect, all men shall be saved, and the worship of Jehovah established throughout the whole world, xlv. 14–25. In xlvi. the impotence of the Babylonian gods to save themselves when the city is taken by Cyrus is contrasted with the incomparable power of Jehovah as shown in history, and in His foreknowledge of the future, and made the basis of a warning to Israel to cast away despondency. Then follows a song of triumph over Babylon, the proud and luxurious, whose doom all her magic and astrology cannot avert (xlvii.). Ch. xlviii. strikes in places a different

[1] Ch. xliv. 9–20, though graphic, is diffuse, and interrupts the context: it is probably a later addition.

note from that of the previous chapters. They are a message of comfort; and, where the people are censured, it is for lack of faith and responsiveness. In this chapter, on the other hand, the tone is in places stern, almost harsh, and the people are even charged with idolatry. Probably an original prophecy of Deutero-Isaiah has been worked over by a post-exilic hand. This chapter is in the nature of a summary. It emphasizes Jehovah's fore-knowledge as witnessed by the ancient prophecies and their fulfilment in the coming deeds of Cyrus; and the section fittingly closes with a ringing appeal to Israel to go forth out of Babylon.[1]

Chapters xlix.–lv. presuppose the same general situation as xl.–xlviii.; but whereas the earlier chapters deal incidentally with the victories of Cyrus and the folly of idolatry, xlix.–lv. concentrate attention severely upon Israel herself, which is often addressed as Zion. The group begins with the second of the "servant" songs, xlix. 1–6, its theme being Israel's divine call, through suffering and redemption, to bring the whole world to the true religion. In earnest and beautiful language Israel is assured of restoration and a happy return to her own land, of the rebuilding of her ruins, and the increase of her population; and no power can undo this marvellous deliverance, for Jehovah, despite His people's slender faith, is omnipotent, xlix. 7–l. 3. In l. 4–9 the servant tells of the sufferings which his fidelity brought him, and his confidence in Jehovah's

[1] Ch. xlviii. 22 is probably borrowed from lvii. 21, where it is in place, to divide xl.–lxvi. into three equal parts.

power to save and vindicate him.[1] The glorious salvation is near and sure ; let Israel but trust in her omnipotent God and cast away all fear of man, li. 1–16. Bitter has been Jerusalem's sorrow, but now she may break forth into joy, for messengers are speeding with good tidings of her redemption, li. 17–lii. 12. The fourth and last song of the servant, lii. 13–liii. 12, celebrates the strange and unparalleled sufferings which he bore for the world's sake—his death, resurrection, and the consequent triumph and vindication of his cause. In fine contrast to the sufferings of the servant acquainted with grief is the joy that follows in ch. liv.—joy in the vision of the restored, populous and glorious city, or rather in the everlasting love of God by which that redemption is inspired.[2] Nothing remains but for the people to lay hold, in faith, of the salvation which is so nigh, and which is so high above all human expectation (lv.).

Chapters lvi.–lxvi.

The problem of the origin and date of this section is one of the most obscure and intricate in the Old Testament. The general similarity of the tone to that of xl.–lv. is unmistakable. There is the same assurance of redemption, the same brilliant pictures of restoration. But, apart from the fact that, on the whole, the style of lvi.–lxvi. seems less original and powerful, the situation presupposed is distinctly

[1] Ch. l. 10, 11 are apparently late.

[2] From liv. 17 and on we hear of the "*servants* of Jehovah," not as in xl.–liii., of the *servant*.

different. In xl.–lv., Israel, though occasionally regarded as unworthy, is treated as an ideal whole, whereas in lvi.–lxvi. there are two opposed classes within Israel itself (cf. lvii. 3ff., 15ff.). One of these classes is guilty of superstitious and idolatrous rites, lvii. 3ff., lxv. 3, 4, lxvi. 17, whereas in xl.–lv. the Babylonians were the idolaters, xlvi. 1. Again, the kind of idolatry of which Israel is guilty is not Babylonian, but that indigenous to Palestine, and it is described in terms which sometimes sound like an echo of pre-exilic prophecy, lvii. 5, 7 (Hos. iv. 13)—so much so indeed that some have regarded these passages as pre-exilic.

The spiritual leaders of the people are false to their high trust, lvi. 10–12. This last passage implies a religious community more or less definitely organized—a situation which would suit post-exilic times, but hardly the exile ; and this presumption is borne out by many other hints. The temple exists, lvi. 7, lx. 7, 13, but religion is at a low ebb. Fast days are kept in a mechanical spirit, and are marred by disgraceful conduct (lviii.). Judah suffers from raids, lxii. 8, Jerusalem is unhappy, lxv. 19, her walls are not yet built, lx. 10. The gloomy situation explains the passionate appeal of lxiii. 7–lxiv. to God to interpose—an appeal utterly unlike the serene assurance of xl.–lv. : it explains, too, why threat and promise here alternate regularly, while there the predominant note was one of consolation.

In its general temper and background, though not in its style, the chapters forcibly recall Malachi. There is the same condemnation of the spiritual leaders (lvi. 10–12 ; Mal. i. ii.), the same emphasis on

the fatherhood of God (lxiii. 16, lxiv. 8; Mal. i. 6, ii. 10, iii. 17), the same interest in the institutions of Judaism (lvi.), the same depressed and hopeless mood to combat. From lx. 10 (lxii. 6 ?) it may be inferred that the book falls before the building of the walls by Nehemiah—probably somewhere between 460 and 450 B.C. This conclusion, of course, is very far from certain; it is not even certain that the chapters constitute a unity. Various scholars isolate certain sections, assigning, e.g., lxiii.–lxvi. to a period much later than lvi.–lxii., others regarding xlix.–lxii. as written by the same author as xl.–xlviii., but later and other different conditions, others referring lvi.–lxii. to a pupil of Deutero-Isaiah, who wrote not long after 520 (cf. Hag., Zech.).

To complicate matters, the text of certain passages of crucial importance seems to be in need of emendation (cf. lxiii. 18); and it is practically certain that there are later interpolations. One can see how intricate the problem becomes, if Marti is right in denying so important a passage as lxiv. 10–12 to the author of the rest of the chapter, and assigning it to Maccabean times. But, though there are undoubted difficulties in the way, it seems not impossible to regard lvi.–lxvi. as, in the main, a unity, and its author as a contemporary of Malachi. In that case, the superstitious and idolatrous people, whose presence is at first sight so surprising in the post-exilic community, would be the descendants of the Jews who had not been carried into exile, and who, being but superficially touched, if at all, by the reformation of Josiah, would perpetuate ancient idolatrous practices into the post-exilic period.

This prophecy begins with a word of assurance to the proselytes and eunuchs that, if they faithfully observe the Sabbath, they will not be excluded from participation in the temple worship, lvi. 1–8. But the general situation (in Judah) is deplorable. The spiritual leaders of the community are indolent and fond of pleasure, men of no conscience or ideal (cf. Mal. ii.), with the result that the truly godly are crushed out, lvi. 9–lvii. 2, and the old immoral idolatry is rampant, lvii. 3–13. The sinners will therefore be punished, but the godly whom they have persecuted will be comforted and saved, lvii. 14–21. The people, who have been zealously keeping fast-days, are surprised and vexed that Jehovah has not yet honoured their fidelity by sending happier times: the prophet replies that the real demands of Jehovah are not exhausted by ceremonial, but lie rather in the fulfilment of moral duty, and especially in the duty of practical love to the needy (lviii.). It is not the impotence of Jehovah, but the manifold sins of the people, that have kept back the day of salvation, lix. 1–15; but He will one day appear to punish His adversaries and redeem the penitent and faithful, lix. 16–21. Then the city of Jerusalem shall be glorious: her scattered children shall stream back to her, her walls shall be rebuilt by the gifts of the heathen nations, and she shall be mistress of the world, enjoying peace and light and prosperity (lx.). Again the good news is proclaimed: the Jews shall be, as it were, the priests of Jehovah for the whole world, Jerusalem shall be secure and fair and populous (lxi., lxii.). But if Judah is thus to prosper, her enemies must be destroyed,

and their [1] destruction is described in lxiii. 1–6, a unique and powerful song of vengeance.

A very striking contrast to all this dream of victory and blessedness is presented by lxiii. 7–lxiv. 12, in which the people sorrowfully remind themselves of the brilliant far-off days of the Exodus when the Spirit was with them—the Spirit whom sin has now driven away—and passionately pray that Jehovah, in His fatherly pity, would mightily interpose to save them.[2] The devotees of superstitious cults are threatened with destruction, lxv. 1–7, while brilliant promises are held out to the faithful—long and happy life in a world transformed, lxv. 8–25. Again destruction is predicted for those who, while practising superstitious rites, are yet eager to build a temple to Jehovah to rival the existing one in Jerusalem; while the faithful are comforted with the prospect of victory, increase of population and resources, and the perpetuity of their race (lxvi.).

[1] The enemy is not Edom alone. Instead of "from Edom and Bozrah" in lxiii. 1*a* should be read, "Who is this that comes *stained with red*, with garments redder than a *vine-dresser's*?"

[2] Professor G. A. Smith refers this prayer to the period of disillusion after the return and before the new religious impulse given by Haggai and Zechariah—about 525 B.C.

Jeremiah

THE interest of the book of Jeremiah is unique. On the one hand, it is our most reliable and elaborate source for the long period of history which it covers; on the other, it presents us with prophecy in its most intensely human phase, manifesting itself through a strangely attractive personality that was subject to like doubts and passions with ourselves. At his call, in 626 B.C., he was young and inexperienced, i. 6, so that he cannot have been born earlier than 650. The political and religious atmosphere of his ministry was alike depressing. When it began, the Scythians were overrunning Western Asia, and Judah was the vassal of Assyria, as she continued to be till the fall of Nineveh in 606 B.C. Josiah, in whose reign Jeremiah began his ministry, was a good king; but the idolatries of his grandfather Manasseh had only too surely left their mark, and the reformation which was inaugurated on the basis of Deuteronomy (621) had produced little permanent result. Idolatry and immorality of all kinds continued to be the order of the day, vii. 9 (about 608). The inner corruption found its counterpart in political disaster. The death of Josiah in 609 at Megiddo, when he took the field, probably as the vassal of Assyria, against the king of Egypt, was a staggering blow to

the hopes of the reformers, and formed a powerful argument in the hands of the sceptics. The vassalage of Assyria was exchanged for the vassalage of Egypt, and that, in four years, for the vassalage of Babylonia, whose supremacy over Western Asia was assured by her victory on the epoch-making field of Carchemish (605).

There was no strong ruler upon the throne of Judah during the years preceding the exile. Jehoahaz, the successor of Josiah, deposed by the Egyptians and exiled after a three months' reign, xxii. 10–12, was succeeded by the rapacious Jehoiakim (608-597), who cared nothing for the warning words of Jeremiah (xxxvi.), and his successor Jehoiachin, who was exiled to Babylon after a three months' reign, was followed by the weak and vacillating Zedekiah, who reigned from 597 to 586, when Jerusalem was taken and the monarchy perished. The priests and prophets were no more faithful to their high office than the kings. The prophets were superficial men who did not realize how deep and grievous was the hurt of the people, xxiii. 9–40, and who imagined that the catastrophe, if it came, would speedily be reversed, xxviii.; and the priests reposed a stubborn confidence in the inviolability of the temple (xxvi.) and the punctiliousness of their offerings, vii. 21, 22.

Jeremiah, though he came of a priestly family, knew very well that there was no salvation in ritual. He saw that the root of the evil was in the heart, which was "deceitful above all things and desperately sick," xvii. 9, and that no reformation was possible till the heart itself was changed. It was for

this reason that he called upon the people to circumcise their heart, iv. 4, and to search for Jehovah with all their heart, xxix. 13.

It would be interesting to know what was Jeremiah's attitude to the law-book discovered and published in 621, but unfortunately the problems that gather round the authenticity of the text of Jeremiah are so vexatious that we cannot say with certainty. On the one hand, we know that, though at that time a prophet of five years' standing, he was not consulted on the discovery of the book (2 Kings xxii. 14); on the other hand, xi. 1–14 explicitly connects him with an itinerant mission throughout the province of Judah for the purpose of inculcating the teaching of "the words of this covenant," which can only be the book of Deuteronomy. But there is fairly good reason for supposing that this passage, which is diffuse, and very unlike the poems that follow it, *vv.* 15, 16, 18–20, is one of the many later scribal additions to the book. Even if Jeremiah did support the Deuteronomic movement, he must have felt, in the words of Darmesteter, that "it is easier to reform the cult than the soul," and that the real solution would never be found in the statutes of a law-book, but only in the law written upon the heart, xxxi. 31–33. Here again, this great prophecy of the law written upon the heart, has been denied to Jeremiah—by Duhm, for example: but at any rate, it is conceived in the spirit of the prophet.

It is unfortunate that some of the noblest utterances on religion in the book of Jeremiah have been, for reasons more or less convincing, denied to him: e.g. the great passage which looks out upon a time

when the dearest material symbols of the ancient religion would no longer be necessary; days would come when men would never think of the ark of the covenant, and never miss it, iii. 16. But even if it could be proved that these words were not Jeremiah's, it was a sound instinct that placed them in his book. He certainly did not regard sacrifice as essential to the true religion, or as possessing any specially divine sanction, vii. 22, and the thinker who could utter such a word as vii. 22 is surely on the verge of a purely spiritual conception of religion, if indeed he does not stand already within it. If the temple is not indispensable, vii. 4, neither could the ark be.

This severely spiritual conception of religion is but the outcome of the intensely personal religious experience of the prophet. There is no other prophet whose intercourse with the divine spirit is so dramatically portrayed, or into the depths of whose heart we can so clearly see. He speaks to God with a directness and familiarity that are startling, "Why hast Thou become to me as a treacherous brook, as waters that are not sure?" xv. 18. He has little of the serene majesty of Isaiah whose eyes had seen the king. His tender heart, ix. 1, is vexed and torn till he curses not only his enemies, xi. 20ff., but the day on which he was born, xx. 14–18. He did not choose his profession, he recoiled from it; but he was thrust into the arena of public life by an impulse which he could not resist. The word, which he would fain have hidden in his heart, was like a burning fire shut up in his bones, and it leaped into speech of flame, xx. 9.

As a poet, Jeremiah is one of the greatest. He knows the human heart to its depths, and he possesses a power of remarkably terse and vivid expression. Nothing could be more weird than this picture of the utter desolation of war:—

I beheld the earth,
  And lo! it was waste and void.
I looked to the sky,
  And lo! its light was gone.
I beheld the mountains,
  And lo! they trembled.
And all the hills
  Swayed to and fro.
I beheld (the earth)
  And lo! there was no man,
And all the birds of the heaven
  Had fled. iv. 23–25.

A world without the birds would be no world to Jeremiah. Of singular power and beauty is the lament which Jeremiah puts into the mouths of the women:—

Death is come up at our windows,
  He has entered our palaces,
Cutting off the children from the streets
  And the youths from the squares.

Then the figure changes to Death as a reaper:—

There fall the corpses of men
  Upon the face of the field,
Like sheaves behind the reaper
  Which none gathers up. ix. 21, 22.

The book appropriately opens with the call of Jeremiah, and represents him as divinely preordained to his great and cheerless task before his birth. In two visions he sees prefigured the coming doom (i.) and the prophecies that immediately follow, though but loosely connected, appear

to come from an early stage of his ministry, and to be elicited, in part, by the inroads of the Scythians—the enemy from the north.

False to the love she bore Jehovah in the olden time, Israel has turned for help to Egypt, to Assyria, and to the impotent Baals with their licentious worship, ii. 1–iii. 5; but [1] if in her despair and misery she yet turns with a penitent heart to Jehovah, the prophet assures her of His readiness to receive her, iii. 19–iv. 4. The rest of ch. iv. contains several poems of remarkable power. The Scythians are coming swiftly from the north, and Jeremiah's patriotic soul is deeply moved. He sees the desolation they will work, and counsels the people to gather in the fortified cities. The scene changes in v. and vi. to the capital, where Jeremiah's tender and unsuspecting heart has been harrowed by the lack of public and private conscience; and again the land is threatened with invasion from the swift wild Scythian hordes.

The following chapter (vii.) introduces us to the reign of Jehoiakim.[2] The prophet strenuously

[1] Ch. iii. 6–18 contains much that is altogether worthy of Jeremiah, especially the great conception in *v.* 16 of a religion which can dispense with its most cherished material symbols. It interrupts the connection, however, between *vv.* 5 and 19, and curiously regards Israel as the northern kingdom, distinct from Judah, whereas in the surrounding context, ii. 3, iii. 23, Israel stands for Judah. The difference is suspicious. Again, *v.* 18 would appear to presuppose that Judah is in exile or on the verge of it, which would make the passage among the latest in the book. If it is Jeremiah's, it must be much later than its context.

[2] The scene in ch. vii. is very similar to, if not identical with that in ch. xxvi., which is expressly assigned to the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign (608).

combats the confidence falsely reposed in the temple and the ritual: the former is but a den of robbers, the latter had never been commanded by Jehovah, and neither will save them. With sorrowful eyes Jeremiah sees the coming disaster, and he sings of it in elegies unspeakably touching (viii.–x.: cf. viii. 18–22, ix. 21, 22).[1]

In ch. xi. Jeremiah is divinely impelled to undertake an itinerant mission throughout Judah in support of the Deuteronomic legislation, but he is warned that, for their disobedience, the people will be overtaken by disaster, which he must not intercede to avert, xi. 1–17. A cruel conspiracy formed against him by his own townsmen raises perplexities in his mind touching the moral order, but he is reminded that still harder things are in store, xi. 18–xii. 6. Then follows a poem, xii. 7–13, lamenting the desolation of the land, though who the aggressors are it is hard to say; but, in *vv.* 14–17, a passage possibly much later, there is an ultimate possibility of restoration both for Judah and her ravaged neighbours, if they adopt the religion of Judah. In ch. xiii. which possibly belongs to Jehoiachin's short

[1] Ch. ix. 22 is directly continued by x. 17. Of the three passages intervening, ix. 23, 24 (the true and false objects of confidence) and ix. 25, 26 (punishment of those uncircumcised in heart or flesh) are both in the spirit of Jeremiah, but they cannot belong to this context. Ch. x. 1–16, on the other hand, can hardly be Jeremiah's. Its theme is the impotence of idols and the omnipotence of Jehovah—a favourite theme of Deutero-Isaiah (cf. Is. xl.), and it is elaborated in the spirit of Is. xliv. 9–20. The warning not to fear the idols is much more natural if addressed to an exilic audience than to Jeremiah's contemporaries. It may be taken for granted that the passage is later than Jeremiah.

reign, 597 B.C. (cf. *v.* 18 with 2 Kings xxiv. 8), the utter and incurable corruption of the people is symbolically indicated to Jeremiah, who announces the speedy fall of the throne and the sorrows of exile.

The elements that make up chs. xiv.–xvii. are very loosely connected. Generally speaking, the situation of the people is desperate. The doom—already inaugurated in the form of a drought—is hastening on; no excuse will be accepted and no intercession can avail. In a bold and striking poem, xv. 10–21, Jeremiah complains of his bitter and lonely fate, and is reassured of the divine support. In view of the impending misery he is forbidden to marry, and more and more he is thrown back upon Jehovah as his absolute and only hope.[1]

Chs. xviii.–xx. A chance sight of a potter refashioning a spoiled vessel suggests to Jeremiah the conditional nature of prophecy. But as Judah remains obstinate, the threat must be irretrievably fulfilled. The proclamation of this truth in the temple court led to his imprisonment. On his release he distinctly and deliberately announces the exile to Babylon, and then breaks out into a passionate cry, which rings with an almost unparalleled sincerity, over the misery of his life, especially of that prophetic life to which he had been mysteriously but irresistibly impelled.

[1] Ch. xvii. 19–27 is almost certainly post-exilic, and probably belongs to Nehemiah's time (about 450). Jeremiah nowhere else emphasizes the Sabbath, and it would be very unlike him to represent the future prosperity of Judah as conditional upon the people's observance of a single law, especially one not distinctively ethical. Such emphasis on the Sabbath suggests the post-exilic church (cf. Neh. xiii.; Is. lviii.).

Ch. xxi. 1–10, one of the latest pieces in the book, contains Jeremiah's answer to the question of Zedekiah relative to the issue of the siege of Jerusalem, which had already begun (588). Then follow two sections, one dealing with kings, xxi. 11–xxiii. 8, the other with prophets, xxiii. 9–40. The former, after an introduction which emphasizes the specific functions of the king, deals successively with Jehoahaz (=Shallum), Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin, Jehoiakim's oppressive methods being pointedly contrasted with the beneficent régime of his father Josiah ; and against the present incompetence of the rulers and misery of the monarchy is thrown up a picture of the true king and the Messianic days, xxiii. 5–8. The latter section, xxiii. 9–40, denounces the prophets for their immorality, their easy optimism and their lack of independence.

In ch. xxiv., which falls in Zedekiah's reign, after the first deportation (about 596 B.C.), it is symbolically suggested to Jeremiah that the exiles are much better than those who were allowed to remain in the land, and their ultimate fate would be infinitely happier. The battle of Carchemish in 605 showed that Babylonian supremacy was ultimately inevitable ; to this year belongs ch. xxv., in which Jeremiah definitely announces the duration of the exile as seventy years. Many lands beside Judah would be included in the doom, and finally Babylon itself would be punished.

Chs. i.–xxv. represent in the main the words of Jeremiah ; we now come to a group of narratives by Baruch, xxvi.–xxix. Ch. xxvi. relates how a courageous sermon of Jeremiah's (608 B.C.) provoked the

hostility of the professional clergy, and nearly cost him his life. Chs. xxvii.–xxix. show how the calm wisdom of Jeremiah met the ambitions and hopes cherished by his countrymen at home and in exile during the reign of Zedekiah.[1] In view of a coalition that was forming against Babylon in Western Asia, he announces that the supremacy of Nebuchadrezzar is divinely ordained, and any such coalition is doomed to failure (xxvii.). That supremacy will last for many a day ; and a strange fate overtakes the shallow prophet who supposes that it will be over in two years (xxviii.). The exiles are therefore advised by Jeremiah in a letter to settle down contentedly in their adopted land, though the letter naturally rouses the resentment and opposition of the superficial prophets among the exiles (xxix.).

The next four chapters, xxx.–xxxiii., are full of promise : they look out upon the restoration, in which, despite the seeming hopelessness of the prospect, Jeremiah never ceased to believe. It is a voice from the dark days of the siege of Jerusalem, 587 (xxxii. 1ff.), but the present sorrow is to be followed by a period of joy, when the city will be rebuilt, and the mighty love of Jehovah will express itself in the restoration not only of Judah but of Israel, a love to which there will be a glad spontaneous response from men who have the divine law written in their hearts. This prophecy of the new covenant is one of the noblest and most daring conceptions in the Old Testament, very naturally appropriated by our Lord and the author of the Epistle

[1] In ch. xxvii. 1, for " Jehoiakim " read " Zedekiah," cf. *vv.* 3, 12.

to the Hebrews (xxx., xxxi.). So confident was Jeremiah in the divine assurance that Palestine would one day be freed from the Babylonian yoke that, even during the siege of the city, he purchased fields belonging to a kinsman, and took measures to preserve the title deeds (xxxii.). Ch. xxxiii. still further confirms the assurance of restoration.

There can be no doubt that Jeremiah both believed in and announced the restoration: the very straightforward story in ch. xxxii., which, by the way, throws considerable light on the psychology of prophecy, is proof enough of that. But there can be equally little doubt that the section xxx.–xxxiii. did not come, as it stands, from the hand of Jeremiah. Many verses have no doubt been needlessly suspected: the attitude to northern Israel in ch. xxxi., especially *vv.* 4, 5, practically forbids a reference of these verses to post-exilic times. But xxxi. 7–14—the glad return—is exactly in the spirit of Deutero-Isaiah, and appears to be dependent upon him. Whatever doubt, however, may be attached to these sections, it is practically certain that the concluding section, xxxiii. 14–26, which has a special word of promise, not only for the house of David, but for the Levitical priests, is not Jeremiah's. The verses are wanting in the Septuagint, and so were not in the Hebrew copy from which that translation was made; but more fatal still to their authenticity is their attitude to the priests and offerings. The religion advocated by Jeremiah was a purely spiritual one, which could dispense with temple and sacrifice (ch. vii.). "To the false prophets," as Robertson Smith has said, "and the

people who followed them, the ark, the temple, the holy vessels, were all in all. To Jeremiah they were less than nothing, and their restoration was no part of his hope of salvation." It is very significant in this connection that the Septuagint omits the restoration of the holy vessels in xxvii. 22.

From the ideal pictures of the last group, ch. xxxiv. flings us back into the stern reality. The city and the king alike are doomed, and their fate is thoroughly justified by the treachery displayed towards the Hebrew slaves, who were compelled by their masters to return to the bondage from which, in the stress of siege, they had emancipated them.

The next chapter, xxxv., carries us back to the reign of Jehoiakim, and, in an interesting and important passage, contrasts the faithfulness of the Rechabites to the commands of their ancestor Jonathan with the popular disregard of Jehovah.

The long section which follows (xxxvi.–xlv.) is almost purely historical. It comes in the main from Baruch, but it has been expanded here and there by subsequent writers; e.g. xxxix. 4–13 is not found in the Septuagint; the importance of Jeremiah is heightened in this passage by his being the object of the special care of Nebuchadrezzar, *vv.* 11ff., whereas in all probability his fate was decided, not by the king, but by his officers (cf. 3, 13, 14). But after making every deduction, these chapters remain as a historical source of the first rank. The section begins by revealing the reckless impiety of Jehoiakim in burning the prophecies of Jeremiah in 605 B.C., but the other

chapters gather round the siege of Jerusalem, eighteen years later, and the events that followed it. They describe the cruel and successive imprisonments of the prophet for his fearless and seemingly unpatriotic proclamation of the Babylonian triumph, the pitiful vacillation of the king, the final capture of the city, the appointment of Gedaliah as governor of Judah, his assassination and the attempt to avenge it, the consequent departure of many Jews to Egypt against the advice of Jeremiah, who was forced to accompany them, the prophet's denunciation of the idolatry practised in Egypt and announcement of the conquest of that land by Nebuchadrezzar. The section closes (xlv.) with a word of meagre consolation to Baruch, whose courage was giving way beneath the strain of the times.

The interest attaching to the oracles against the foreign nations (xlvi.–li.) is not very great, as, for good reasons, the authenticity of much—some say all—of the section may be disputed, and with the exception of the oracle against Egypt, they are lacking, as a whole, not only in distinctness of situation, but also in that emotion and originality so characteristic of Jeremiah.

The whole group (except the oracle against Elam, xlix. 34–39, which is expressly assigned to Zedekiah's reign) is suggested by reflection on the decisive influence which the battle of Carchemish was bound to have on the fortunes of Western Asia, xlvi. 2. Nebuchadrezzar is alluded to, either expressly, xlix. 30, or figuratively, xlviii. 40, as the instrument of the divine vengeance. In the

Septuagint, this group of oracles appears between xxv. 13 and xxv. 15, a chapter likewise assigned to the year of the battle of Carchemish, xxv. 1. Ch. xlvi. contains two oracles against Egypt, the first of which, at least *vv.* 1–12, is graphic and powerful, and the second, *vv.* 13–26, announces the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadrezzar, which took place in 568 B.C. The vengeance upon Egypt, *v.* 10, in which the writer evidently exults, may be vengeance for the defeat of Josiah at Megiddo.[1] A certain vigour also characterizes the oracle against the Philistines (xlvii.), and the conception of the enemy "out of the north," *v.* 2, is a familiar one in Jeremiah.

Even if, however, these oracles could be rescued for Jeremiah, those that follow are, in all probability, nothing but later literary compilations resting upon a close study of the earlier prophetical literature. The oracle against Moab (xlviii.) besides being unpardonably diffuse, is essentially an imitation of the old oracle preserved in Isaiah xv., xvi. The oracle against Ammon, xlix. 1–6, is followed by another against Edom, *vv.* 7–22, which again borrows very largely from Obadiah. Doom is further pronounced on Damascus, *vv.* 23–27, Kedar and Hazor, *vv.* 28–33, and, about seven years later, on Elam, *vv.* 34–39. It is not, indeed, impossible that Jeremiah should have uttered a prophetic word concerning at least some of these nations —witness his reply to the ambassadors of the neighbouring kings in ch. xxvii.—though the re-

[1] Ch. xlvi. 27, 28, hardly in place here, were borrowed from xxx. 10f. and doubtless added later.

levance of Elam in such a connection is hard to see; but it is very improbable that a writer and thinker so independent as Jeremiah should have borrowed in the wholesale fashion which characterizes the bulk of this group of oracles. The oracle against Egypt might be his, not impossibly the oracle against the Philistines also; but the group as a whole, consisting of seven oracles—omitting the oracle against Elam, which, by its date, falls outside—appears to be a later artificial composition, utilizing the more familiar names in xxv. 19–26, and expanding the hint in *vv.* 15–17 that the nations would be compelled to drink of the cup of the fury of Jehovah.

The climax of the foreign oracles is that against Babylon (l.–li. 58). This prophecy is written with great vigour and intensity and characterized by a tone of triumphant scorn. A nation from the north, l. 3, explicitly designated as the Medes, li. 11, is to assail Babylon and reduce her to a desolation. Jehovah's people are urged to leave the doomed city; with sins forgiven they will be led back by Jehovah to their own land, and the poet contemplates with glowing satisfaction the day when Babylon the destroyer will be herself destroyed.

This oracle purports to be a message which Jeremiah sent with an officer Seraiah, who accompanied King Zedekiah to Babylon (li. 59). There is no probability, however, that the oracle was written by Jeremiah. Doubtless the prophet foretold the destruction of Babylon, xxv. 10, but his attitude to that great power in this oracle is altogether different from what we know it to have been,

judging by other authentic oracles of this period (xxvii.–xxix.). There he counsels patience—it is the false prophets who hope for a speedy deliverance—here there is an eager expectancy which amounts to impatience. But the contents of the oracle show that it cannot belong to the year to which it is assigned. The temple is already destroyed, l. 28, li. 11, so that the exile is presupposed, and indeed the Medes are definitely named as the executors of vengeance upon Babylon. All this carries us down to the conquests of Cyrus and the close of the exile, indeed to the time of Isaiah xl.–lv. The oracle bears a striking resemblance both in spirit and expression to Isaiah xiii., and might well come from the same time (about 540). It may, however, be later. Not only is it diffuse in expression and slipshod in arrangement, but it borrows extensively from other exilic or post-exilic parts of the book of Jeremiah (cf. li. 15–19 with x. 12–16, l. 44–46 with xlix. 19–21), late exilic parts of Isaiah (cf. Jer. l. 39ff. with Isa. xiii. 19–22), and from Ezekiel (cf. Jer. li. 25 with Ezek. xxxv. 3). Besides, the author appears to have no clear conception of the actual situation, as he seems to regard Israel and Judah as living side by side in Babylon, l. 4, 33. In all probability the oracle against Babylon is a post-exilic production inspired by the yearning to see the ancient oppressors not only humbled, but destroyed.

The oracle just discussed is supposed to be an expansion of the message given by Jeremiah, in writing, to Seraiah, li. 60*a*, when he went with the king to Babylon. But though this narrative, li.

59–64, possibly rests on a basis of fact, it cannot have come, in its present form, from Jeremiah, for it presupposes the preceding oracle against Babylon, which has just been shown not to be authentic.

With the composition of ch. lii., which narrates the capture of Jerusalem and the exile of the people, Jeremiah had nothing whatever to do. The chapter, except *vv.* 28–30, which is additional, is simply taken bodily from 2 Kings xxiv. 18–xxv. 30, with the omission of the account of the appointment and assassination of Gedaliah (2 Kings xxv. 22–26) as that story had already been fully told in Jeremiah xl.–xliii.

The Greek version of Jeremiah is of more than usual interest and importance. It is about 2,700 words, or one-eighth of the whole, shorter than the Hebrew text, though it has about 100 words or so not found in the Hebrew. The order, too, is occasionally different, notably in the oracles against the foreign nations (xlvi.–li.), which in the Septuagint are placed between xxv. 13 and xxv. 15 (verse 14 being omitted). After making every deduction for the usual number of mistakes due to incompetence and badly written manuscripts, it has to be admitted that, in certain respects, the Greek text is superior to the Hebrew. This is especially plain if we examine its omissions. Considering the later tendency to expand, its relative brevity is a point in its favour; but, when we examine particular cases, the superiority of the Septuagint, with its omissions, is evident at once.

Ch. xxvii., e.g., is considerably longer in the

Hebrew than in the Greek text ; but the additions in the Hebrew text represent Jeremiah as interested in the temple vessels and prophesying their restoration to the temple when the exile was over, in a way that is utterly unlike what we know of Jeremiah's general attitude to the material symbols of religion. Similarly, xxxiii. 14–26, which promises, among other things, that there would never be lacking a Levitical priest to offer burnt offerings, is wanting in the Septuagint ; here again the Greek must be regarded as more truly representing Jeremiah's attitude to sacrifice (vii. 22). It would, of course, be unfair to infer from this that the briefer readings of the Septuagint were invariably superior to the longer readings of the Massoretic text, for it can be shown that the Greek translators often omitted or passed lightly over what they did not understand ; nevertheless, their omissions often indicate a better and more original text.

With regard to the oracles against the foreign nations, there can be little doubt that their position in the Hebrew text is to be preferred to that of the Greek. A certain plausibility attaches to the Greek text which places them after xxv. 13, the last clause of which—" that which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations "—is taken as a title ; but, besides completely breaking up the surrounding context, whose theme is altogether Judah, the Greek position of the oracles is exceedingly clumsy, preceding as it does the enumeration in xxv. 15–29, which it might indeed follow, but could not reasonably precede. Further the Hebrew arrangement of the oracles within this group is much more pro-

bable than the Greek. The former appropriately reserves the oracle against Babylon to the end, the latter places it third, i.e. among the nations which are to be punished by Babylon herself, xxv. 9.

We possess some direct information about the composition of the book of Jeremiah, but the present arrangement is marked by considerable confusion, and can in no case be original. A glance at the contents of consecutive chapters is enough to show that the order is not rigorously chronological. Ch. xxv., e.g., falls in 605 B.C., whereas the preceding chapter is at least eight years later (cf. xxiv. 1, 8). Ch. xxi. 1–10, which reflects the period of the siege of Jerusalem, is one of the latest passages in the book (587 B.C.). There are occasional traces of a topical order: e.g. chs. xviii., xix., give lessons from the potter, xxi. 9–xxiii. 8 is a series of prophecies concerning kings, xxiii. 9–40 another concerning prophets. Chs. xxx.–xxxiii. gather up the prophecies concerning the restoration. Chs. xxxvii.–xliv. constitute a narrative dealing with the siege of the city and events immediately subsequent to it. Here we touch one of the striking peculiarities of the book of Jeremiah that much of it is purely narrative. Again, in the narrative portion, sometimes the prophet speaks himself in the first person, as in the account of his call (i.), sometimes he is spoken of in the third, xxviii. 5.

This suggests that some passages are more directly traceable to Jeremiah than others, and the clue to this fact is to be found in the interesting story told in ch. xxxvi. There we are informed that Jeremiah

dictated to his disciple Baruch the scribe the messages of his ministry since his call twenty-one years before. After being read before the public gathering at the temple, and then before the court, they were destroyed by the king, Jehoiakim; but the messages were rewritten by Baruch, and many similar words, we are told, were added, xxxvi. 32. It is clear that the book written by Baruch to Jeremiah's dictation cannot have been very long, as it could be read three times in one day, but it is impossible to say what precisely were its constituent elements. Roughly speaking, they must be confined to chs. i.–xxv., as the following chapters (except xlvi.–li.) are either narrative, like xxvi.–xxix., xxxvii.–xliv., or, if prophetic words of Jeremiah, come from a later date (cf. xxx.–xxxiii., xxxii. 1). But the book cannot have included all of i.–xxv., for, as we have seen, parts of this section are later than 605, when the book was first dictated (cf. xxiv., xxi. 1–10), and some are very late (cf. x. 1–16, exilic at the earliest, and xvii. 19–27, post-exilic). The difficulty of determining the constituents is increased by the fact that several of the chapters are undated (e.g. xiv. 1–xvii. 18). No doubt most of chs. i.–xii. and much of xiii.–xxv. were included within the original book dictated.

It is further important to note that the book was dictated; that is to say, it was not written by Jeremiah's own hand, and it was dictated from memory, though very possibly on the basis of notes. Obviously we cannot in any case have in these few chapters more than a summary of the words spoken during a ministry which at that time had already

covered twenty-one years. The strong personal feeling which animates so much of Jeremiah's early prophecies, especially the poetry, we owe directly to his own dictation. The narrative sections, in which he is spoken of in the third person, but most of which obviously came from some one who was thoroughly conversant with the prophet's life, we owe, no doubt, to the faithful Baruch, who clearly held the prophet's words not only in respect, but in reverence, xxxvi. 24. The biography, which, in its earlier chapters, assumes a somewhat annalistic form, xxvi. 1, xxviii. 1, xxix. 1, develops an easy and flowing style when it comes to deal with the siege of Jerusalem (xxxvii.–xliv.). Speaking very generally, the biography covers chs. xxvi.–xlv. (except xxx., xxxi., xxxiii.).

But long after Baruch was in his grave, the book of Jeremiah continued to receive additions. Some of these, from exilic and post-exilic times, we have already seen (cf. l., li.). A relatively large literature grew up around the book of Jeremiah : 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21 even quotes as Jeremiah's a prophecy which does not occur in our canonical book at all. (cf. Lev. xxvi. 34f.). Often those who added to the book had no clear imagination of the historical situation whatever ; one of them represents Jeremiah as addressing the *kings* of Judah—as if they had all lived at the same time—on the question of the Sabbath day (xvii. 20, cf. xix. 3). The extent of these additions has already been illustrated by comparison with the Septuagint, and very often the passages which are not supported by the Greek text are historically the least trustworthy, cf. xxxix.

11, 12. These different recensions of the original text attest the wide popularity of the book; an Aramaic gloss in x. 11 shows the liberties which transcribers took with the text, the integrity of which suffered much from its very popularity. The interest of the later scribes was rather in homiletics than in history, and very probably most of the writing that seems tedious and diffuse in the book of Jeremiah is to be set down to the count of these teaching scribes. Jeremiah was a very gifted poet, with unusual powers of emotional expression, and it is greatly to be regretted that his own message has been so inextricably involved in the inferior work of a later age.

Ezekiel

To a modern taste, Ezekiel does not appeal anything like so powerfully as Isaiah or Jeremiah. He has neither the majesty of the one nor the tenderness and passion of the other. There is much in him that is fantastic, and much that is ritualistic. His imaginations border sometimes on the grotesque and sometimes on the mechanical. Yet he is a historical figure of the first importance; it was very largely from him that Judaism received the ecclesiastical impulse by which for centuries it was powerfully dominated.

Corrupt as the text is in many places, we have in Ezekiel the rare satisfaction of studying a carefully elaborated prophecy whose authenticity is practically undisputed and indisputable. It is not impossible that there are, as Kraetzschmar maintains, occasional doublets, e.g. ii. 3–7 and iii. 4–9; but these in any case are very few and hardly affect the question of authenticity. The order and precision of the priestly mind are reflected in the unusually systematic arrangement of the book. Its general theme might be broadly described as the destruction and the reconstitution of the state, the destruction occupying exactly the first half of the book (i.–xxiv.) and the reconstitution the second half (xxv.–xlviii.).

The following is a sketch of the book. After five years of residence in the land of exile, Ezekiel, through an ecstatic vision in which he beholds a mysterious chariot with God enthroned above it, receives his prophetic call to the "rebellious" exiles (i., ii.), and is equipped for his task with the divine inspiration; that task is partly to reprove, partly to warn (iii.). At once the prophet addresses himself thereto, announcing the siege of Jerusalem and the captivity of Judah—Israel has already been languishing in exile for a century and a half (iv.).[1] The threefold fate of the inhabitants is described (v.), and a stern and speedy fate is foretold for the mountain land of Israel (vi.) and for the people (vii.). How deserved that fate is becomes too pathetically plain in the descriptions of the idolatrous worship with which the temple is desecrated (viii.) and in chastisement for which the inhabitants are slain (ix.) and their city burned (x.). Jehovah solemnly departs from His desecrated temple (xi.).

This general theme of the sin and fate of the city is continued with variations throughout the rest of the first half of the book. The horrors of the siege and exile are symbolically indicated, xii. 1–20, and the false prophets and prophetesses, xiii. 17, are reproved and denounced for encouraging, by their shallow optimism, the unbelief of the people, xii. 21–xiv. 11. For the judgment will assuredly come and no intercession will avail, xiv. 12–23. Israel, in her misery, is like the wood of the vine,

[1] For 390 in iv. 5 the Septuagint correctly reads 190, and this includes the forty years of Judah's captivity.

unprofitable to begin with, and now, besides, scarred and burnt (xv.); her whole career has been one of consistent infidelity—Israel and Judah alike (xvi.). And her kings are as perfidious as her people—witness Zedekiah's treachery to the king of Babylon (xvii.). But contrary to prevalent opinion, the present generation is not atoning for the sins of the past; every man is free and responsible and is dealt with precisely as he deserves—the soul that sinneth, *it* shall die (xviii.). Then follows a beautiful elegy over the princes of Judah—Jehoahaz taken captive to Egypt, and Jehoiachin to Babylon (xix.).

The third cycle (xx.–xxiv.) is, in the main, a repetition of the second. From the very day of her election, Israel has been unfaithful, giving herself over to idolatry, immorality, and the profanation of the Sabbath (xx.). But the devouring fire will consume, and the sharp sword of Nebuchadrezzar will be drawn, first against Jerusalem, and then against Ammon (xxi.). The corruption of Jerusalem is utter and absolute—princes, priests, prophets, and people (xxii.); and this corruption has characterized her from the very beginning—Samaria and Jerusalem, the northern and southern kingdoms alike (xxiii.). So the end has come: the filth and rust of the empty caldron—symbolic of Jerusalem after the first deportation in 597 B.C.—will be purged away by a yet fiercer fire. The besieged city is at length captured, and, like the prophet's wife, it perishes unmourned (xxiv.).

The ministry of judgment, so far as it concerns Jerusalem, is now over, and Ezekiel is free to turn

to the more congenial task of consolation and promise. But a negative condition of the restoration of Israel is the removal of impediments to her welfare, and next to her own sins her enemies are the greatest obstacle to her restoration ; it is with them, therefore, that the following prophecies are concerned.

The seven oracles in chs. xxv.–xxxii. (587–586 B.C., cf. xxvi. 1, except xxix. 17–21 in 570 B.C.) are directed against Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia (xxv.), Tyre, xxvi. 1–xxviii. 19, Sidon, xxviii. 20–26, and Egypt (xxix.–xxxii.). Tyre and Egypt receive elaborate attention ; the other peoples are dismissed with comparatively brief notice. The general reason assigned for the destruction of the smaller peoples in xxv. is their vengeful attitude to Israel. Ammon in particular is singled out for her malicious joy over the destruction of the temple and her mockery of the captive Jews. The destruction of these people is no doubt to be brought about indirectly, if not directly, as in the case of Tyre, xxvi. 7, and Egypt, xxix. 19, by Nebuchadrezzar. The oracle against Tyre is one of Ezekiel's most brilliant compositions. The glorious city is to be stormed and destroyed by Nebuchadrezzar (xxvi.), and her fall is celebrated in a splendid dirge, in which she is compared to a noble merchant ship wrecked by a furious storm upon the high seas (xxvii.) ; her proud prince will be humbled to the ground (xxviii.). Egypt is similarly threatened with a desolating invasion at the hands of Nebuchadrezzar ; the conquest of that country is to be his recompense for his failure, contrary to Ezekiel's

expectations, to capture Tyre (xxix.). The day of Jehovah draws nigh upon Egypt (xxx.); like a proud cedar she will be felled by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar (xxxi.), and her fall is celebrated in two dirges—one in which Pharaoh is compared to a crocodile; the other, weird and striking, describes the arrival of the slain Egyptians in the world below (xxxii.).

With the disappearance of Israel's enemies, one of the great obstacles to her restoration has been removed; but the greatest obstacle is in Israel herself. She has been stiff-necked and rebellious: now that the prophet's words have proved true,[1] each individual for himself must give heed to his warning voice, not merely consulting him, but obeying him (xxxiii.). Then Jehovah will manifest His grace in many ways. He will send them an ideal king, unlike the mercenary rulers of the past, who had plundered the flock (xxxiv.). He will destroy the unbrotherly Edomites (xxxv.) and bless His people Israel with the peaceful possession of a fruitful land, and with the better blessing of the new heart (xxxvi.) Finally, He will wake the people, who are now as good as dead, to a new life, and unite the long sundered Israel and Judah under one sceptre for ever (xxxvii.). In the final assault which will be made against His people by the mysterious hordes of Gog from the north, He will preserve them from danger, and multitudes of the assailants will fall and be buried in the land of Israel (xxxviii., xxxix.).

[1] In xxxiii. 21 the *twelfth* year should be the *eleventh* (cf. xxvi. 1). The news of the fall of Jerusalem would not take over a year to travel to Babylon.

Probably the book originally ended here: but from Ezekiel's point of view, the remaining chapters (xl.–xlviii.) are thoroughly integral to it, if indeed they be not its climax. The people are now redeemed and restored to their own land: the problem is, how shall they maintain the proper relations between themselves and their God? The unorganized community must become a church, and an elaborate organization is provided for it. The temple, with its buildings, is therefore first minutely described, as that is to be the earthly residence of the people's God; then the rights and duties of the priests are strictly regulated: and lastly the holy land is so redistributed among the tribes that the temple is practically in the centre.

Chs. xl.–xliii. embrace the description and measurement of the temple, with its courts, gateways, chambers, decorations, priests' rooms and altar. When all is ready, Jehovah solemnly enters, xliii. 1–12, by the gate from which Ezekiel had in vision seen Him leave almost nineteen years before, x. 19. The sanctity of the temple where Jehovah is henceforth to dwell must be scrupulously maintained, and this is secured by the regulations in xliv.–xlvi. The menial services of the sanctuary, which were formerly performed by foreigners, are to be henceforth performed by Levites. Then follow regulations determining the duties and revenues of the priests, the territory to be occupied by them, also by the Levites, the city and the prince; the religious duties of the prince, and the rite of atonement for the temple. The whole description is a striking counterpart to the earlier vision of the desecration

of the temple (viii.). The last section (xlvii., xlviii.) deals with the land which in these latter days is to share the redemption of the people. The barren ground near the Dead Sea is to be made fertile, and the waters of that sea sweet, by a stream issuing from underneath the temple. The land will be redistributed, seven tribes north and five south of the temple, and the city will bear the name " Jehovah is there "—symbolic of the abiding presence of the people's God.

Whatever be the precise meaning of the much disputed " thirtieth year " in i. 1, Ezekiel was born probably about or not long before the time Jeremiah began his ministry in 626 B.C. As a young man, he must have heard Jeremiah preach, and this, coupled with the fact that some of Jeremiah's prophecies were in circulation about eight years before Ezekiel went into exile (605–597) explains the profound influence which the older prophet plainly exercised upon the younger. With Jehoiachin and the aristocracy, Ezekiel was taken in 597 to Babylon, where he lived with his wife, xxiv. 16, among the Jewish colony on the banks of the Chebar, one of the canals tributary to the Euphrates, i. 3.

Never had a prophet been more necessary. The people left behind in the land were thoroughly depraved, xxxiii. 25ff., the exiles were not much better, xiv. 3ff.—they are a rebellious house, ii. 6 ; and even worse than they are the exiles who came with the second deportation in 586, xiv. 22. Idolatry of many kinds had been practised (viii.) ; and now that the penalty was being paid in exile, the people

were helpless, xxxvii. 11. For six years and a half —till the city fell—Ezekiel's ministry was one of reproof; after that, of consolation. The prophet becomes a pastor. His ministry lasted at least twenty-two years, the last dated prophecy being in 570 (xxix. 17); for thirteen years before the writing of chs. xl.–xlviii. in 572 B.C. there is no dated prophecy, xxxii. 1, 17, so that this sketch of ecclesiastical organization, pathetic as embodying an old man's hope for the future, stands among his most mature and deliberate work. His absolute candour is strikingly shown by his refusal to cancel his original prophecy of the capture of Tyre by Nebuchadrezzar, xxvi. 7, 8, which had not been fulfilled; he simply appends another oracle and allows the two to stand side by side, xxix. 17–20.

It is obvious that in Ezekiel prophecy has travelled far from the methods, expressions and hopes that had characterized it in the days of Amos and Isaiah, or even of Ezekiel's immediate predecessor and contemporary, Jeremiah. In these books there are visions, such as those of Amos, vii. 1, viii. 1, ix. 1, and symbolic acts like that of Isaiah, xx. 2, walking barefoot; but there such things are only occasional, here they abound. Their interpretation, too, is beset by much uncertainty. Some maintain that the symbolic actions, unless when they are obviously impossible, were really performed; others regard them simply as part of the imaginative mechanism of the book. The dumbness, e.g., with which Ezekiel was afflicted for a period, iii. 26, xxiv. 27, xxxiii. 22, and which has been interpreted as "a sense of restraint and defeat," may very well have

been real, and connected, as has been recently supposed, with certain pathological conditions; but it is hardly to be believed that he lay on one side for 190 days[1] (iv. 5). Again, though the curious action representing the threefold fate of the inhabitants of the city in ch. v. is somewhat grotesque, it is not absolutely impossible; but it is difficult to see how the command to eat bread and drink water "with trembling" can be taken literally, xii. 18. As the first symbolic action in the book—the eating of the roll, iii. 1–3—must be interpreted figuratively, it would seem not unfair to apply this principle to all such actions. It is even applied by Reuss to the very circumstantial story of the death of the prophet's wife, xxiv. 15ff., which he characterizes as an "easily deciphered hieroglyph."

Again, in spite of their highly elaborated detail, the visions appeal, and are intended to appeal, rather to the mind than to the eye. Such a vision as that of the divine chariot in ch. i. could not be transferred to canvas; and if it could, the effect would be anything but impressive. Regarded, however, as a creation of the intellectual imagination, suggesting as it does certain attributes of God, and clothing them with a mysterious and indefinable majesty, it is not without an impressiveness of its own.

A similar sense of unreality has been held to pervade the speeches. It has been asserted that they are simply artificial compositions, never addressed and not capable of being addressed to any audience of living men. Certainly one can hardly conceive of

[1] So the Septuagint.

the last chapters, with their minute description of the temple buildings, officers and ceremonies, as forming part of a public address ; and some even of the earlier chapters, e.g. xvi., xxiii., do not suggest that living contact with an audience which invests the earlier prophets with their perennial dramatic interest. At the same time, to regard him simply as an author and in no sense as a public man would undoubtedly be to do him less than justice, cf. xi. 25. He was in any case a pastor—a new office in Israel, to which he was led by his overwhelming sense of the indefeasible importance of the individual (iii. 18ff., xviii., xxxiii.). But—especially in his earlier ministry, till the fall of the city—he was prophet as well as pastor, with a public message of condemnation very much like that of his predecessors. His reputation as a prophet naturally rose with the corroboration which his words had received from the fall of the city, xxxiii. 30, but even before this it must have been high, as we find him frequently consulted, viii. 1, xiv. 1, xx. 1 ; and though behind the real audience he addresses, we often cannot help feeling that his words have in view that larger Israel of which the exiles form a part (cf. vi.), the chapters, as they now stand, are no doubt in most cases expansions of actual addresses. This view is strengthened by the precision of the numerous chronological notices, cf. viii. 1.

There is another important aspect in which the contrast between Ezekiel and the pre-exilic prophets is very great : viz. in his attitude to ritual. Every one of them had expressed in emphatic language the relative, if not the absolute, indifference of ritual to

true religion (Amos v. 25, Hos. vi. 6, Isa. i. 11ff., Mic. vi. 6–8). No one had expressed himself in language more strong and unmistakable than Ezekiel's contemporary, Jeremiah. Yet Ezekiel himself devotes no less than nine chapters to a detailed programme for the ecclesiastical organization of the state after the return from exile (xl.–xlviii.). With some justice Lucien Gautier has called him the " clerical " prophet, and Duhm goes so far as to say that he annihilated spontaneous and ethical religion. This, as we shall see, is a grave exaggeration ; but there can be no doubt that in Ezekiel the centre of gravity of prophecy has shifted. He threw ritual into a prominence which, in prophecy, it had never had before, and which, from his day on, it successfully maintained (cf. Hag., Zech., Mal.).

It is difficult to estimate justly the importance to Hebrew religion of the new turn given to it by Ezekiel : it seems to be, and in reality it is, a descent from the more purely spiritual and ethical conception of the earlier prophets. But two things have to be remembered (1) that, for the situation contemplated by Ezekiel, such a programme as that which he drew up was a practical religious necessity. The spiritual atmosphere in which Jeremiah drew his breath so freely was too rare for the average Israelite. Religious conceptions had to be expressed in material symbols. The land and the temple had been profaned by sin (viii.) ; after the return, their holiness must be secured and guaranteed, and Ezekiel's legislation makes the necessary provision by translating that idea into specific and concrete applications.

But (2) though ritual interests are very prominent towards the close of the book, they do not by any means exhaust the religious interests of Ezekiel. If not very frequently, at any rate very deliberately and emphatically, he asserts the ethical elements that are inseparable from true religion and the moral responsibility of the individual (iii., xviii., xxxiii.). Indeed, the background of xl.–xlviii. is a people redeemed from their sin. The worshippers are the redeemed; and even in this almost exclusively ritual section ethical interests are not forgotten, xlv. 9ff. In interpreting the mind of the man who sketched this priestly legislation, it is surely unfair to ignore those profound and noble utterances touching the necessity of the new heart, xviii. 31, xxxvi. 26, and the new spirit, xi. 19, utterances which have the ring of some of the greatest words of Jeremiah.

It must be admitted, however, that Ezekiel did not fully realize the implications of these profound words: he at once proceeds to apply them in a somewhat mechanical way, which suggests that his religion is a thing of "statutes and judgments," if it is also a thing of the spirit, xxxvi. 27 (cf. xx. 11, 13), and this tendency to a mechanical view of things is characteristic of the prophet. Even in the great chapter asserting the responsibility of the individual (xviii.) something of this tendency appears in the isolation of the various periods of the individual life from each other. It shows itself again in his description of the river that issues from under the threshold of the temple, xlvii. 3–6. His imagination, which was considerably influenced by Babylonian

art, is undisciplined. Images are worked out with a detail artistically unnecessary, and aesthetically sometimes offensive (xvi., xxiii.). On the other hand the book is not destitute of noble and chastened imaginations. The weird fate of Egypt in the underworld, xxxii. 17–32, the glory of Tyre and the horror which her fate elicits (xxvii.) are described with great power. Nothing could be more impressive than the vision of the valley of dry bones—the fearful solitude and the mysterious resurrection (xxxvii.). Ezekiel's imaginative power perhaps reaches its climax in his vision of the destruction of Jerusalem and her idolatrous people on the judgment day we see the corpses of the sinners, slain by supernatural executioners, lying silently in the temple court, the prophet prostrate and sorrowful, and the angel departing with glowing coals to set fire to the guilty city, ix. 1–x. 7.

The two chief elements in later Judaism practically owe their origin to Ezekiel, viz. apocalypse and legalism. The former finds expression in chs. xxxviii., xxxix., where, preliminary to Israel's restoration, Gog of the land of Magog—an ideal, rather than, like the Assyrians or Babylonians, an historical enemy of Israel—is to be destroyed. We have already seen how prominent the legalistic interest is in xl.–xlviii., but it is also apparent elsewhere. Ezekiel, e.g., lays unusual stress upon the institution of the Sabbath, and counts its profanation one of the gravest of the national sins, xx. 12, xxii. 8, xxiii. 38. The priestly interests of Ezekiel are easily explained by his early environment. He belonged by birth to the Jerusalem priesthood, i. 3, xliv. 15, and he

received his early training under the prophetico-priestly impulse of the Deuteronomic reformation.

From the critical standpoint, the book of Ezekiel is of the highest importance. Chs. xl.–xlviii. fall midway between the simpler legislation of Deuteronomy, and the very elaborate legislation of the priestly parts of the Pentateuch. This is especially plain in the laws affecting the priests and the Levites.

In Deuteronomy no distinction is made between them ; there the phrase is, " the priests the Levites " (Deut. xviii. 1) ; in the priestly code (cf. Num. iii. iv., v.) they are very sharply distinguished, the Levites being reserved for the more menial work of the sanctuary. Now the origin of this distinction can be traced to Ezekiel, according to whom the Levites were the priests who had been degraded from their priestly office, because they had ministered in idolatrous worship at the high places, xliv. 6ff., whereas the priests were the Zadokites who had ministered only at Jerusalem. The natural inference is that, at least in this respect, the priestly legislation of the Pentateuch is later than Ezekiel. A close study of chs. xl.–xlviii. enables us to extend this inference. Between Ezekiel and that legislation there are serious differences (cf. xlvi. 13, Exod. xxix. 38, Num. xxviii. 4), which, as early as the beginning of the Christian era, gave much perplexity to Jewish scholars. " According to the traditional view," as Reuss has said, " Ezekiel would be reforming, not Israel, but Moses, the man of God, and the mouth of Jehovah Himself." We have no alternative, then, but to suppose that Ezekiel is earlier than the

priestly legislation of the Pentateuch, and that this sketch in xl.–xlviii. prepared the way for it.

In Ezekiel the older prophetic conception of God has undergone a change. It has become more transcendental, with the result that the love of God is overshadowed by His holiness. It is of His grace, no doubt, that the people are ultimately saved; but, according to Ezekiel, He is prompted to His redemptive work not so much out of pity for the fallen people, xxxvi. 22, but rather "for His name's sake," xx. 44—that name which has been profaned by Israel in the sight of the heathen, xx. 14. The goal of history is, in Ezekiel's ever-recurring phrase, that men may "know that I am Jehovah." Corresponding to this transcendental view of God is his view of man as frail and weak—over and over again Ezekiel is addressed as "child of man"—and history has only too faithfully exhibited that inherent and all but ineradicable weakness. While other prophets, like Hosea and Jeremiah, had seen in the earlier years of Israel's history, a dawn which bore the promise of a beautiful day, to Ezekiel that history has from the very beginning been one unbroken record of apostasy (xvi., xxiii.). On the other hand, Ezekiel laid a wholesome, if perhaps exaggerated, emphasis on the possibility of human freedom. A man's destiny, he maintained, was not irretrievably determined either by hereditary influences, xviii. 2ff., or by his own past, xxxiii. 10f. Further, Jeremiah had felt, if he had not said, that the individual, not the nation, is the real unit in religion: to Ezekiel belongs the merit of supple-

menting this conception by that other, that religion implies fellowship, and that individuals find their truest religious life only when united in the kingdom of God (xl.–xlviii.).

Hosea

THE book of Hosea divides naturally into two parts : i.–iii. and iv.–xiv., the former relatively clear and connected, the latter unusually disjointed and obscure. The difference is so unmistakable that i.–iii. have usually been assigned to the period before the death of Jeroboam II, and iv.–xiv. to the anarchic period which succeeded. Certainly Hosea's prophetic career began before the end of Jeroboam's reign, as he predicts the fall of the reigning dynasty, i. 4, which practically ended with Jeroboam's death.[1] But i.–iii. seem to be the result of long and agonized meditation on the meaning of his wedded life : it was not at once that he discovered Gomer to be an unfaithful wife, i. 2, and it must have been later still that he learned to interpret the impulse which led him to her and threw such sorrow about his life, as a word of the Lord, i. 2. These chapters were probably therefore written late, though the experiences they record were early.

Of the date, generally speaking, of iv.–xiv. there can be no doubt : they reflect but too faithfully the confusion of the times that followed Jeroboam's death. It is a period of hopeless anarchy. Moral law is set at defiance, and society, from one end to the other, is in confusion, iv. 1, 2, vii. 1. The court is corrupt, conspiracies are rife, kings are assassinated,

[1] Zechariah his son reigned for only six months.

vii. 3–7, x. 15. We are irresistibly reminded of the rapid succession of kings that followed Jeroboam—Zechariah his son, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah. Gilead, however, is still part of the northern kingdom, vi. 8, xii. 11, so that the deportation effected by Tiglath Pileser in 734 B.C. has not yet taken place (2 Kings xv. 29). Further, there is no mention of the combination of Israel and Aram against Judah; and, as Hosea was a very close observer of the political situation, his silence on this point may be assumed to imply that his prophecies fall earlier than 735. The date of his prophetic career may safely be set about 743–736 B.C.

In chs. i. and iii. Hosea reads the experiences of his wedded life as a symbol of Jehovah's experience with Israel. Gomer bore him three children, to whom he gave names symbolic of the impending fate [1] of Israel, i. 1–9. The faithless Gomer abandons Hosea for a paramour, but he is moved by his love for her to buy her out of the degradation into which she has fallen, and takes earnest measures to wean her to a better mind. All this Hosea learns to interpret as symbolic of the divine love for Israel, which refuses to be defeated, but will seek to recover the people, though it be through the stern discipline of exile (iii.). Ch. ii. elaborates the idea, suggested by these chapters, of Israel's adultery, i.e. of her unfaithfulness to Jehovah, of the fate to which it

[1] Chs. i. 10–ii. 1 interrupts the stern context with an outlook on the Messianic days, considers Judah as well as Israel, presupposes the exile of Judah, and anticipates ii. 21–23. It can hardly therefore be Hosea's; nor can i. 7, which is quite irrelevant and appears to be an allusion to the deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib in 701 B.C.

will bring her, and of her redemption from that fate by the love of her God.[1]

It is quite impossible even to attempt a summary of iv.–xiv., partly because of the hopeless corruption of the text in very many passages, partly from the brevity and apparently disjointed nature of the individual sections. Possibly this is due, in large measure, to later redactors of the book, or to the fragmentary reports of the prophet's addresses; perhaps, however, it also expresses something of the abrupt passion of his speeches, which, as Kautzsch says, were "more sob than speech." The general theme of this division appears in its opening words, "There is no fidelity or love or knowledge of God in the land," iv. 1.

That knowledge of God is in part innate and universal: it is knowledge of *God*, and not specifically of Jehovah—not knowledge of a code, but fidelity to the demands of conscience. It was, however, the peculiar business of the priests to proclaim and develop that knowledge; and for the deplorable perversity of Israel, they are largely held responsible, iv. 6. The worship of Jehovah, which ought to be a moral service, vi. 6, is indistinguishable from Baal worship (ii.) and idolatry. Upon the calf, the symbol under which Jehovah was worshipped, and upon those who worship Him thus, Hosea pours indignant and sarcastic scorn, viii. 5, 6, x. 5, xiii. 2.

[1] It is much more satisfactory to interpret i., iii. as a real experience of Hosea, and not simply as an allegory. If it be objected, on the one hand, that the names of the last two children are not probable names, it may be urged, on the other, that Gomer seems to be an actual name, for which no plausible allegorical meaning has been suggested.

Ignorance of the true nature of God is at the root of the moral and political confusion. It is this that leads the one party to coquet with Egypt and the other with Assyria, vii. 11, viii. 9, xi. 5, xii. 1, and the price paid for Assyrian intervention was a heavy one (2 Kings xv. 19, 20, cf. Hosea v. 13). The native kings, too, are as impotent to heal Israel's wounds as the foreigners, vii. 7, x. 7; and though it might be too much to say that Hosea condemns the monarchy as an institution, viii. 4, the impotence of the kings to stem the tide of disaster is too painfully clear to him, x. 7, 15.

Whether Hosea ever alludes to Judah in his genuine prophecies is very doubtful. Some of the references are obvious interpolations (cf. i. 7), and for one reason or another, nearly all of them are suspicious: in vi. 4, e.g., the parallelism (cf. *v.* 10) suggests that *Israel* should be read instead of *Judah*. But there can be no doubt that the message of Hosea is addressed in the main, if not exclusively, to northern Israel. It is her land that is *the* land, i. 2, cf. 4, her king that is "our king," vii. 5, the worship of her sanctuaries that he exposes, and her politics that he deplores.

If Amos is the St. James of the Old Testament, Hosea is the St. John. It is indeed possible to draw the contrast too sharply between Amos and Hosea, as is done when it is asserted that Amos is the champion of morality and Hosea of religion. Amos is not, however, a mere moralist; he no less than Hosea demands a return to Jehovah, iv. 6, 8, v. 6, but he undoubtedly lays the emphasis on the moral ex-

pression of the religious impulse, while Hosea is more concerned with religion at its roots and in its essence. Thus Hosea's work, besides being supplementary to that of Amos, emphasizing the love of God where Amos had emphasized His righteousness, is also more fundamental than his. There is something of the mystic, too, in Hosea: in all experience he finds something typical. The character of the patriarch Jacob is an adumbration of that of his descendants (xii.), and his own love for his unfaithful wife is a shadow of Jehovah's love for Israel (i.–iii.).

His message to Israel was a stern one, probably even sterner than it now reads in the received text of many passages, e.g., xi. 8, 9. He represents Jehovah as saying to Israel: "Shall I set thee free from the hand of Sheol? Shall I redeem thee from death? Hither with thy plagues, O death! Hither with thy pestilence, O Sheol! Repentance is hidden from mine eyes," xiii. 14. But it is too much to say with some scholars that the sternness is unqualified and to deny to the prophet the hope so beautifully expressed in the last chapter. There were elements in Hosea's experience of his own heart which suggested that the love of Jehovah was a love which would not let His people go, and ch. xiv. (except *v.* 9) may well be retained, almost in its entirety, for Hosea. His passion, though not robust, like that of Amos, is tender and intense, xi. 3, 4: as Amos pleads for righteousness, he pleads for love (Hos. vi. 6), *hesed*, a word strangely enough never used by Amos; and it is no accident that the great utterance of Hosea—"I will have love and not sacrifice," vi. 6—had a special attraction for Jesus (Matt. ix. 13, xii. 7).

Joel

THE book of Joel admirably illustrates the intimate connection which subsisted for the prophetic mind between the sorrows and disasters of the present and the coming day of Jehovah : the one is the immediate harbinger of the other. In an unusually devastating plague of locusts, which, like an army of the Lord,[1] has stripped the land bare and brought misery alike upon city and country, man and beast—" for the beasts of the field look up sighing unto Thee," i. 20—the prophet sees the forerunner of such an impending day of Jehovah, bids the priests summon a solemn assembly, and calls upon the people to fast and mourn and turn in penitence to God. Their penitence is met by the divine pity and rewarded by the promise not only of material restoration but of an outpouring of the spirit upon all Judah,[2] which is to be accompanied by marvellous signs in the natural world. The restoration of Judah has as its correlative the destruction of Judah's enemies, who are represented as gathered together in the valley of Jehoshaphat—

[1] Some regard the locusts as an allegorical designation for an invading army. But without reason : in ii. 7 they are *compared* to warriors, and the effect of their devastations is described in terms inapplicable to an army.

[2] The sequel, in which the nations are the objects of divine wrath, shows that the " all flesh," ii. 28, must be confined to Judah.

i.e. the valley where "Jehovah judges"—and there the divine judgment is to be executed upon them.

The theological value of the book of Joel lies chiefly in its clear contribution to the conception of the day of Jehovah. As Marti says, "The book does not present one side of the picture only, but combines all the chief traits of the eschatological hope in an instructive compendium"—the effusion of the spirit, the salvation of Jerusalem, the judgment of the heathen, the fruitfulness of the land, the permanent abode of Jehovah upon Zion. These features of the Messianic hope are, in the main, characteristic of post-exilic prophecy; and now, with very great unanimity, the book is assigned, in spite of its position near the beginning of the minor prophets, to post-exilic times.

A variety of considerations appears to support this date. Judah is the exclusive object of interest. Israel has no independent existence, and, where the name is mentioned, it is synonymous with Judah, ii. 27, iii. 2, 16. Further, the people are scattered among the nations, iii. 2, and strangers are not to pass through the "holy" Jerusalem any more, iii. 17. The exile and the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar in 586 B.C. appear therefore to be presupposed. But the temple has been rebuilt; there are numerous allusions to priests and to meal and drink offerings, i. 9, 13, ii. 14, 17, and an assembly is summoned to "the house of Jehovah your God," i. 14: the reference to the city wall, ii. 9, would bring the date as late as Nehemiah in the fifth century. Other arguments, though more precarious, are not without weight, e.g., the ease and smoothness

of the language, the allusion to the Greeks, iii. 6, the absence of any reference to the sin of Judah,[1] the apparent citations from or allusions to other prophetic books.[2]

The effect of this cumulative argument has been supposed to be overwhelming in favour of a post-exilic date. Recently, however, Baudissin, in a very careful discussion, has ably argued for at least the possibility of a pre-exilic date. Precisely in the manner of Joel, Amos iv. 6–9 links together locusts and drought as already experienced calamities. Both alike complain of the Philistine and Phoenician slave-trade. The enemies—Edom, Phoenicia, Philistia, iii. 4, 19—fit the earlier period better than the Persian or Greek. In the ninth century, Judah was invaded by the Philistines and Arabians according to the Chronicler (2 Chron. xxi. 16ff.), whose statements in such a matter there is no reason for doubting, and Jerusalem may then have suffered : in any case, we know that the treasures of temple and palace were plundered as early as Rehoboam's time (1 Kings xiv. 25ff.), and this might be enough to satisfy the allusion in Joel iii. 17. Again, if Joel is smooth, Amos is not much less so ; and linguistic peculiarities that seem to be late might be due to dialect or personal idiosyncrasy. With regard to the argument from citations, it would be possible to maintain that Joel's simple and natural picture of the stream from the temple watering the acacia valley, iii. 18, was not borrowed from, but rather

[1] Though it may be implied in ii. 12f.

[2] Obad. *v.* 17, Jo. ii. 32 ; Amos i. 2, Jo. iii. 16 ; Amos ix. 13, Jo. iii. 18 ; Ezek. xlvii. 1ff., Jo. iii. 18.

suggested the more elaborate imagery of Ezekiel, xlvii. For these and other reasons Baudissin suggests with hesitation that a date slightly before Amos is by no means impossible.[1]

The question is much more than an academic one, for on the answer to it will depend our whole conception of the development of Hebrew prophecy. Sacerdotal interests, e.g., here receive a prominence in prophecy which we are accustomed to associate only with the period after the exile. Here again, the promises are for Judah, the threats for her enemies—an attitude also characteristic of post-exilic prophecy : it is customary to deny to the pre-exilic prophets any word of promise or consolation to their own people. Obviously if the priest and the element of promise have already so assured a place in the earliest of the prophets, the ordinary view of the course of prophecy will have to be seriously modified. The lack of emphasis displayed by Joel on the ethical aspect of religion, which has been made to tell in favour of a late date, might tell equally well in favour of a very early one. Indeed, the book is either very early or very late ; and, if early, it represents what we might call the pre-prophetic type of Israel's religion, and especially the non-moral aspirations of those who, in Amos's time, longed for the day of Jehovah, and did not

[1] It is interesting to note that Vernes, Rothstein and Strack have independently reached the conclusion that chs. i., ii. have a different origin from iii., iv. In the former, the state still exists, and the calamity is a plague of locusts ; in the latter, no account is taken of the locusts—it is a time of national disaster. The reasons, however, are hardly adequate for denying the unity of the book.

know that for them it meant thick darkness, without a streak of light across it (Amos v. 18). On the whole, however, the balance leans to a post-exilic date. The Jewish dispersion seems to be implied, iii. 2. The strange visitation of locusts suggests to the prophet the mysterious army from the north, ii. 20, which had haunted the pages of Ezekiel (xxxviii., xxxix.) ; and in this book, prophecy (i., ii.) merges into apocalyptic (iii., iv.).

Amos

Amos, the first of the literary prophets, is also one of the greatest. Hosea may be more tender, Isaiah more serenely majestic, Jeremiah more passionately human; but Amos has a certain Titanic strength and rugged grandeur all his own. He was a shepherd, i. 1, vii. 15, and the simplicity and sternness of nature are written deep upon his soul. He is familiar with lions and bears, iii. 8, v. 19, and the terrors of the wilderness hover over all his message. He had observed with acuteness and sympathy the great natural laws which the experiences of his shepherd life so amply illustrated, iii. 3ff., and his simple moral sense is provoked by the cities, with the immoral civilization for which they stand. With a lofty scorn this desert man looks upon the palaces, i. 4, etc., the winter and the summer houses, iii. 15, in which the luxurious and rapacious grandees of the time indulged, and contemplates their ruin with stern satisfaction.

Those were the days of Jeroboam II, i. 1, and, as the period is marked by an easy self-assurance, and the ancient boundaries of Israel are restored, vi. 14 (cf. 2 Kings xiv. 25, 28), Amos belongs, no doubt, to the latter half of his reign, probably as late as 750 B.C., for he knows, though he does not name, the Assyrians, vi. 14, and he finds in their irresistible progress westwards an answer to the moral demands of his heart. Israel's exhausting wars with the

Arameans were now over. Aram herself had been weakened by the repeated assaults of Assyria, and Israel was enjoying the dangerous fruits of peace. Extravagance was common, and drunkenness, no less among the women than the men, iv. 1. The grossest immorality is associated even with public worship, ii. 7, and religion is being eaten away by the canker of commercialism, viii. 5. The poor are driven to the wall, and justice is set at defiance by those appointed to administer it, ii. 6, v. 7. Such was the society, brilliant without and corrupt within, into which Amos hurled his startling message that the God who had chosen them, iii. 2, guided their history, ii. 9, and sent them prophets to interpret His will, ii. 11, would punish them for their iniquities, iii. 2.

It is not certain whether the unusually skilful disposition of the book of Amos is due to himself or to a much later hand.[1] It has three great divisions : (*a*) the judgment (i., ii.), (*b*) the grounds of the judgment (iii.–vi.), (*c*) visions of judgment, with an outlook on the Messianic days (vii.–ix.). In chs. i., ii., with his sense of an impartial and universal moral law, Amos sees the judgment sweep across seven countries in the west—Aram, Philistia, Phoenicia, Edom, Ammon, Moab and Israel.[2] The

[1] Note the refrains in i., ii., cf. i. 3, 6 ; iii.–vi. are held together by three "hears," iii. 1, iv. 1, v. 1, and apparently by three "woes," v. 7 (emended text), v. 18, vi. 1 ; so the visions in vii.–ix. are introduced by "Thus hath (the Lord Jehovah) shown me."

[2] It is difficult to believe that the colourless oracle against Judah, ii. 4, 5, couched in perfectly general terms, is original. Doubts that are not unreasonable have also been raised regarding the oracle against Edom, i. 11, 12.

sins denounced are, e.g., the barbarities of warfare and the cruelties of the slave trade; but Amos dwells with special emphasis and detail on the sins of Israel, as that is the country to which, though a Judean, he has been specially sent, vii. 10, 15.

In the next section (*b*) he begins by asserting that Israel's religious prerogative will only the more certainly ensure her destruction, and justifies his threat of doom by his irrepressible assurance of having heard the divine voice, iii. 1–8. The doom is deserved because of the rapacity, luxury, iii. 9–15, and drunkenness, iv. 1–3, nor will their sumptuous worship save them, iv. 4, 5. Warnings enough they have had already, but as they have all been disregarded, God will come in some more terrible way, iv. 6–13. Then follows a lament, v. 1–3, and an appeal to hate the evil and seek God and the good, v. 4–15; otherwise He will come in judgment and the "day of Jehovah," for which the people long, will be a day of storm and utter darkness, v. 16–20. To-day, as in the time of the Exodus, Jehovah's demands are not ritual but moral, and the neglect of them will end in captivity, v. 21–27. The luxury and self-assurance of the people are again scornfully denounced, and the doom of exile foretold (vi.).

(*c*) Then follow visions of destruction from locusts and drought, vii. 1–6, the vision of the plumbline, symbolical of the straightness to which Israel has failed to conform, vii. 7–9, the vision of the summer fruit, which, by a play upon words, portended the end, viii. 1–3, and the vision of the ruined temple, ix. 1–7. These visions are interrupted by the exceedingly interesting and instructive story of the

encounter of the prophet with the supercilious courtier-priest of Bethel, and Amos's fearless reiteration of his message, vii. 10–17; and also by the section viii. 4–14, with its exposition of the evils and its threats of judgment—a section more akin to iii.–vi. than to vii.–ix. The book concludes with an outlook on the redemption and prosperity which will follow in the Messianic age, ix. 8–15. It is hardly possible that this outlook can be Amos's own. In one whose interest in morality was so overwhelming, it would be strange, though perhaps not impossible, that the golden age should be described in terms so exclusively material; but the historical implications of the passage are not those of Amos's time. It is further an express contradiction of the immediately preceding words, ix. 2–5, in which, with dreadful earnestness, the prophet has expressed the thought of an inexorable and inevitable judgment from which there is no escape. Besides, while Amos addresses Israel, this passage deals with Judah, presupposes the fall [1] of the dynasty (cf. *v.* 11) and the advent of the exile (ix. 14, 15).[2]

Amos must have had predecessors, ii. 11; but

[1] Even if only the decay were pre-supposed, the words would be quite inapplicable to the long and prosperous reign of Uzziah, i. 1.

[2] The authenticity of a few other passages, cf. viii. 11, 12, has been doubted for reasons that are not always convincing. Most doubt attaches to the great doxologies, iv. 13, v. 8, 9, ix. 5, 6. The utmost that can be said with safety is that these passages are in no case necessary to the context, while v. 8, 9 is a distinct interruption, but that the conception of God suggested by them, as omnipotent and omnipresent, is not at all beyond the theological reach of Amos.

even so the range and boldness of his thought are astonishing. History, reflection and revelation have convinced him that Israel has had unique religious privileges, iii. 2; nevertheless she stands under the moral laws by which all the world is bound, and which even the heathen acknowledge, iii. 9—Amos has nothing to say of any written law specially given to Israel—and by these laws she will be condemned to destruction, if she is unfaithful, just as surely as the Philistines and Phoenicians (i.). Indeed, so sternly impartial is Amos that he at times even seems to challenge the prerogative of Israel. The Philistines and Arameans had their God-guided exodus no less than Israel, and she is no more to Jehovah than the swarthy peoples of Africa, ix. 7. The universal and inexorable claims of the moral law have never had a more relentless exponent than Amos; and, though there is in him a soul of pity, vii. 2, 5, it was his peculiar task, not to proclaim the divine love, but to plead for social justice. God is just and man must be so too. Perhaps Amos's message is all the more daring and refreshing that he was not a professional prophet, vii. 14. His culture, though not formal, is of the profoundest. He is familiar with distant peoples, ix. 7, he has thought long and deeply about the past, he knows the influences that are moulding the present. The religion for which he pleaded was not a thing of rites and ceremonies, but an ideal of social justice—a justice which would not be checked at every step by avarice and cruelty, but would flow on and on like the waves of the sea, v. 24.

Obadiah

THE book of Obadiah—shortest of all the prophetic books—is occupied, in the main, as the superscription suggests, with the fate of Edom. Her people have been humbled, the high and rocky fastnesses in which they trusted have not been able to save them. Neighbouring Arab tribes have successfully attacked them and driven them from their home (*vv.* 1–7).[1] This is the divine penalty for their cruel and unbrotherly treatment of the Jews after the siege of Jerusalem, *vv.* 10–14, 15*b*. Nay, a day of divine vengeance is coming upon all the heathen, when Judah will utterly destroy Edom, and once again possess all the land, north, south, east and west, that was formerly theirs, and the kingdom shall be Jehovah's, *vv.* 15*a*, 16–21.

The date of the prophecy seems to be fixed by the unmistakable allusion in *vv.* 11–14 to the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar in 586 B.C.—an occasion on which the Edomites abetted the Babylonians (Ezek. xxxv. ; Lam. iv. 21 ff. ; Ps. cxxxvii. 7). But the case is gravely complicated by the similarity, which is much too close to be accidental,

[1] Verses 8, 9, which imply that the catastrophe is yet to come, and speak of Edom in the third person, appear to be later than the context. For " thy mighty men, O Teman," in *v.* 9*a*, probably we should read, " the mighty men of Teman."

between Obadiah 1–9 and the oracle against Edom in Jeremiah, xlix. 7–22 (especially *vv.* 14–16, 9, 10, 7, 22); and, though in one or two places the text of Obadiah is superior (cf. Ob. 2, 3; Jer. xlix. 15, 16), the resemblance is such that the passage in Jeremiah must be dependent on Obadiah. Now the date assigned to Jeremiah's oracle is 605 B.C. (xlvi. 2); but obviously Jeremiah could not adopt in 605 a prophecy which was not written till 586. A way out of this difficulty has usually been sought in the assumption that both prophets have made use, in different ways, of an older oracle against Edom, *vv.* 1–9 or 10. But there is no adequate reason for separating *vv.* 11–14, which must refer to the capture of Jerusalem in 586, from *vv.* 1–7. The assumption just mentioned becomes quite unnecessary when we remember that Jeremiah xlix. 7–22, as we have already seen, is probably, at least in its present form, from a period very much later than Jeremiah. The priority therefore rests with Obadiah, whose prophecy has been utilized in Jeremiah xlix.

In *vv.* 1–7 the catastrophe is not predicted for Edom, it has already fallen: it was probably an earlier stage of the Bedawin assaults, whose desolating effect upon Edom is described in Malachi i. 1–5, and must therefore be relegated to a period about the middle of the fifth century. We are probably not far from the truth in dating Obadiah 1–14 about 500 B.C. The memory of Edom's cruelty would still rankle a generation after the return.

But in *vv.* 15*a*, 16–21 the literary and religious colouring is different; *vv.* 1–14 is marked by a certain graphic vigour, *vv.* 15–21 is diffuse. The judg-

ment of Edom in *vv.* 1–14 is in *vv.* 15–21 made only an episode in a great world-judgment. Above all, in *v.* 1 the nations are to execute this judgment, in *v.* 15 they are to be the victims of it. Further, *vv.* 19, 20 seem to imply an extensive dispersion of the Jews. Probably, therefore, this passage expresses the bold eschatological hopes of a later time, when Judah was to be finally redeemed and the heathen annihilated. The section may be later than the oracle in Jeremiah xlix, as no use is made of it there.

Jonah

THE book of Jonah is, in some ways, the greatest in the Old Testament: there is no other which so bravely claims the whole world for the love of God, or presents its noble lessons with so winning or subtle an art. Jonah, a Hebrew prophet, is divinely commanded to preach to Nineveh, the capital of the great Assyrian empire of his day. To escape the unwelcome task of preaching to a heathen people, he takes ship for the distant west, only to be overtaken by a storm, and thrown into the sea, when, by the lot, it is discovered that he is the cause of the storm. He is immediately swallowed by a fish, in the belly of which he remains three days and nights (i.). Then follows a prayer: after which the prophet is thrown up by the fish upon the land (ii.). This time he obeys the divine command, and his preaching is followed by a general repentance, which causes God to spare the wicked city (iii.), whereat Jonah is greatly displeased; but, by a new and miraculous experience, he is taught the shame and folly of his anger, and the infinite greatness of the divine love (iv.).

On the face of it, the narrative is not meant to be strictly historical. Its place among the prophetic books shows that its importance lies, not in its facts,

but in the truths for which it pleads. Much detail is wanting which we should expect to find were the narrative pure history, e.g. the name of the Assyrian king, the results of Jonah's mission, etc. Other circumstances stamp it as unhistorical: considering the poor success the Hebrew prophets had in their own land, such a wholesale conversion of a foreign city, even if such a visit as Jonah's were likely, must be regarded as extremely improbable, to say nothing of the impossibility of the animals fasting and wearing sackcloth, iii. 7, 8. The miraculous fish and the miraculous tree which grew up in a single night forbid us to look for history in the book. Nineveh's fame is a thing of the past, iii. 3; the book is written after, probably long after, its fall in 606 B.C. The lateness of the book and its remoteness from the events it records, are proved in other ways. Its language has the Aramaic flavour of the later books, and such a phrase as "the God of heaven," i. 9, only occurs in post-exilic literature. It contains several reminiscences of late books [1] (e.g. Joel ?), and its ideas are most intelligible as the product of post-exilic times, especially if it be regarded as a protest against a loveless and narrow-hearted type of

[1] There are many points of contact between the prayer in Jonah ii. and the Psalter; but the prayer must be later than the original book of Jonah. It is in reality not a prayer but a psalm of gratitude, and is quite inappropriate to Jonah's horrible situation in the belly of the fish. Even if the metaphors from the sea were interpreted literally, they would not be applicable to Jonah's case; e.g., "the weeds were wrapped about my head," *v.* 5. The Psalm, which is partly, but not altogether, a compilation, must have been inserted here by a later hand, hardly by the author of the book, who would have noticed the impropriety of it.

Judaism. All the conditions point to a date not much, if at all, earlier than 300 B.C.

Jonah is himself a historical character; there is no reason to doubt that the prophet, in whose time Nineveh is standing, i. 2, is contemporary with the Jonah mentioned in 2 Kings xiv. 25 as living in the reign of Jeroboam II, and prophesying the restoration of Israel to its ancient boundaries. It may have been as the representative of an intense and exclusive nationalism that he was chosen as the hero of this book. Here and there the story trenches on Babylonian and Greek legend, but the spirit, if not also the form, is altogether the author's own.

The book abounds in religious suggestion; even its incidental touches are illuminating. It suggests that man cannot escape his divinely appointed destiny, and that God's will must be done. It suggests that prophecy is conditional; a threatened destruction can be averted by repentance. It is peculiarly interesting to find so generous an attitude towards the religious susceptibilities and capacities of foreigners: in this we are reminded of Jesus' parable of the good Samaritan. The foreign sailors cry, in their perplexity, to their gods, and end by acknowledging the God of Israel; the people of Nineveh repent at the prophet's preaching. All this forms a splendid foil to the smallness and obstinacy of Jonah. With his mean views of God, he would not only exclude the heathen from the divine mercy, but rejoice in their destruction. In this the prophet is typical of later Judaism, with its longing for the annihilation of the nations as the obverse of the redemption of Zion. This attitude was greatly encouraged by the rigor-

ous legislation of Ezra ; and Jonah, like Ruth, may be a protest against it, or at least against the bigotry which it engendered. If Israel is, in any sense, an elect people, she is but elected to carry the message of repentance to the heathen ; and the book of Jonah is indirectly, though not perhaps in the intention of the author, a plea for foreign missions.

The greatest lesson of the book is skilfully reserved to the end, iv. 2, 10, 11. It is that God is patient and merciful, that He loves all the world which He created, that His love stretches not only beyond the Jews and away to distant Nineveh, but even down to the animal creation. He hears the prayer of the foreign sailors, He delights in the repentance of Nineveh, He cares for the cattle, iv. 11. This book is the Old Testament counterpart to " God so loved the world."

Micah

MICAH must have been a very striking personality. Like Amos, he was a native of the country—somewhere in the neighbourhood of Gath; and he denounces with fiery earnestness the sins of the capital cities, Samaria in the northern kingdom, and Jerusalem in the southern. To him these cities seem to incarnate the sins of their respective kingdoms, i. 5; and for both ruin and desolation are predicted, i. 6, iii. 12. Micah expresses with peculiar distinctness the sense of his inspiration and the object for which it is given; he is conscious of being filled with the spirit of Jehovah to declare unto Jacob his transgression and unto Israel his sin, iii. 8. In his ringing sincerity, he must have formed a strange contrast to the prophets who regulated their message by their income, iii. 5, and preached to a people whose conscience was slumbering, a welcome gospel of materialism, ii. 11.

The words of Micah must have burned themselves into the memories, if not the consciences, of his generation; for more than a hundred years after—though doubtless by this time the prophecy was written—we find his unfulfilled prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem alluded to by the elders who pled for the life of Jeremiah, xxvi. 17ff. It is certain from this reference that he prophesied

during the reign of Hezekiah; whether also under Jotham and Ahaz (Mic. i. 1) is not so certain, and depends upon whether his prophecy of the destruction of Samaria, i. 6, was made before, or as seems equally possible, after the capture of that city in 721 B.C. At any rate his message was addressed to Judah, and must have fallen (at least i.–iii.) before 701 B.C.—the year in which the city was saved beyond all expectation from an attack by Sennacherib, iii. 12.

Micah begins by describing the coming of Jehovah. He is coming in judgment upon Samaria and Jerusalem, the wicked capitals of wicked kingdoms, i. 1–9; and in the difficult verses, i. 10–16, the devastating march of the enemy through Judah is allusively described. The judgment is thoroughly justified—it is due to the violent and grasping spirit of the wealthy, who do not scruple to crush the poor and defenceless, ii. 1–11. The prophet then [1] brings his charge in detail against the leaders of the people —officials, judges, priests, prophets—accuses them of being mercenary and time-serving, and ends with the terrible threat that the holy hill will one day be made a desolation (iii.).

These chapters are assigned almost unanimously to Micah. But serious critical difficulties are raised in connection with the rest of the book. Chs. iv. and v. constitute a section by themselves, and may be considered separately. Their general theme is the certainty of salvation, but it is quite clear that

[1] Ch. ii. 12, 13, which interrupt the stern address of the prophet, ii. 11, iii. 1 with a promise which implies that Israel is scattered, are probably exilic; they can hardly be Micah's.

they do not form an original unity ; iv. 1–4, e.g., with its generous attitude to the foreign nations, is inconsistent with iv. 11–13, which predicts their destruction. Again, iv. 10 describes a siege of Jerusalem, which is to issue in exile, iv. 11–13, a siege which is to end in the annihilation of the besiegers. Similar difficulties characterize ch. v ; in *vv.* 7–9, 15 the enemies are to be destroyed.

No consecutive outline of the chapters is possible in their present disconnected form. Ch. iv. 1–5 describes the Messianic age, in which the nations will come to Jerusalem to have their cases peacefully arbitrated, iv. 6–8 promise that those scattered (in exile) will be gathered again, and the kingdom of Judah restored. Siege of Jerusalem, exile, and redemption, iv. 9, 10. Unsuccessful siege of Jerusalem and annihilation of the enemy, iv. 11–13. Another siege : Israel's suffering, v. 1. Promise of a victorious king, v. 2–4. Judah's victory over Assyria, v. 5, 6 and all her enemies, v. 7–9. All the apparatus of war and idolatry will be removed from the land, v. 10–14, and vengeance taken on the enemy, v. 15.

The summary shows how disjointed the chapters are. They may not impossibly contain reminiscences or even utterances of Micah ; e.g. the prediction of the fatal siege, v. 1, or of the overthrow of idolatry, v. 10–14. But many elements could not possibly be Micah's : e.g. iv. 8 implies that the kingdom of Judah is already a thing of the past. iv. 6 postulates the exile,[1] and the prophecy of exile to

[1] This might conceivably, though not very naturally, refer to the deportation of *Israel* in 721.

Babylon, iv. 10, would be unnatural in Micah's time, when Assyria was the dominant power.[1] Again it is exceedingly improbable that Micah would have blunted the edge of his terrible threat in iii. 12 by following it up with so brilliant a promise as iv. 1–4, especially as not a word is said about the need of repentance. The story in Jeremiah xxvi. 17ff. raises the legitimate doubt whether Micah's prophecy, which was certainly one of threatening, iii. 12, also contained elements of promise. On the whole it seems best to assume that the fine picture of the glory and importance of Zion in the latter days, iv. 1–4, was set by some later writer as a foil to the stern threat with which the original prophecy closed, cf. Isaiah ii. 1–4. Chs. iv. and v. may be regarded as a collection of prophecies emphasizing the certainty of salvation and intended to supplement i.–iii.

Chs. vi. and vii. take us again into another atmosphere, more like Micah's own. The people, who attempt to defend themselves against Jehovah's charge of ingratitude on the plea that they are ignorant of His demands, are reminded that those demands are ancient and sir ple: justice, love as between man and man, and a humble walk with God, vi. 1–8. But instead, dishonesty and injustice are rampant everywhere, and the judgment of God is inevitable, vi. 9–16. The prophet laments the utter and universal degradation of the people, which has corrupted even the intimacies of family life, vii. 1–6. In the rest of the chapter the blow predicted

[1] Some retain iv. 9, 10 for Micah, and assume either that the Babylon clause is a later interpolation, or that Babylon has displaced another proper name.

has already fallen ; in their sorrow the people await the fulfilment of Jehovah's purpose in patience and faith, pray to Him to restore the land which once was theirs on the east of the Jordan, and thus to compel from the heathen an acknowledgment of His power. He is the incomparable God who can forgive and restore, vii. 7–20.

The accusations and laments of these two chapters come very strangely after the repeated promises of chs. iv. and v. ; and if the whole book had been by Micah, it is hardly possible that this order should have been original. Probably these chapters were appended to Micah's book because of several features which they have in common with i.–iii. : notice, e.g., the prominence of the word "hear," i. 2, iii. 1, 9, vi. 1, 9. Most scholars agree with Ewald in supposing that these chapters—at any rate vi. 1–vii. 6—come from the reign of Manasseh. The situation is that of i.–iii., only aggravated : the reference to Ahab, vi. 16, with whom Manasseh is compared in 2 Kings xxi. 3, points in the same direction. Even if written in this reign, Micah may still have been the author ; but the general manner of the chapters and the individuality they reveal appear to be different from his. But, considering their noble insistence upon the moral elements in religion (esp. vi. 6–8) they are, if not his, yet not inappropriately appended to his book. The concluding section, however, vii. 7–20, is almost certainly post-exilic. The punishment has come, therefore the exile is the earliest possible date. But there are exiles not only in Babylon, but scattered far and wide throughout the world, vii. 12, and there is the expectation that the

walls of Jerusalem will be rebuilt, vii. 11. As this took place under Nehemiah, the section will fall before his time (500–450 B.C.). This passage of promise and consolation is a foil to vi. 1–vii. 6, intended to sustain the same relation to that section as iv., v. to i.–iii.

Thus many hands appear to have contributed to the little book of Micah, and the voices of two or three centuries may be heard in it : earlier words of threatening and judgment are answered by later words of hope and consolation. But wherever else the true Micah is to be found—and his spirit at any rate is certainly in vi. 6–8—he is undoubtedly present in i.–iii. It is a peculiar piece of good fortune that we should possess the words of two contemporary prophets who differed so strikingly as Micah the peasant and Isaiah the statesman. Unlike Isaiah, Micah has nothing to say about foreign politics and their bearing upon religion ; he confines himself severely to its moral aspects, and like Amos, that other prophet of the country, hurls his accusations and makes his high ethical demands, with an almost fierce power, iii. 2, 3. His prophecy justifies his claim to speak in the power and inspiration of his God, iii. 8.

Nahum

POETICALLY the little book of Nahum is one of the finest in the Old Testament. Its descriptions are vivid and impetuous : they set us before the walls of the beleaguered Nineveh, and show us the war-chariots of her enemies darting to and fro like lightning, ii. 4, the prancing steeds, the flashing swords, the glittering spears, iii. 2, 3. The poetry glows with passionate joy as it contemplates the ruin of cruel and victorious Assyria.

In the opening chapter, i., ii. 2, Jehovah is represented as coming in might and anger to take vengeance upon the enemies of Judah, whom He is to destroy so completely that not a trace of them will be left ; and Judah, now delivered, will be free to worship her God in peace. In ch. ii. the enemy, through whom Assyria's destruction is to be wrought, is at the gates of Nineveh, *v.* 8, in all the fierce pomp of war. The city is doomed, the defenders flee, everywhere is desolation and ruin, the ravenous Assyrian lion is slain by the sword. It is because of her sins that this utter ruin is coming upon her, iii. 1–7. Nor need she think to escape ; for the populous and all but impregnable Thebes (No-Amon) was taken, and Nineveh's fate will be the same. Already the people are quaking for fear, some of the strong-

holds of Assyria are taken ; it is time to prepare to defend the capital. But there is no hope, her doom is already sealed, iii. 8–19.

From the historical implications of the prophecy, which belongs, as we shall see, to the seventh century, and also from definite allusions (cf. i. 15), Nahum must have been a Judean ; and, of the three traditions concerning Elkosh his birthplace, which place it respectively in Mesopotamia, in Galilee, and near Eleutheropolis in southern Judah, the last must be held to be very much the most probable. Within certain limits, the date is easy to fix. Ch. iii. 8–10, which are historically the most concrete verses in the prophecy, imply the capture of Thebes, which we now know to have been taken by the Assyrians in 663 B.C. On the other hand, Nineveh has not yet fallen : the theme of the prophecy is just the certainty of its fall. It was taken by the Medians under Kyaxares, leagued with Nabopolassar of Babylon in 606 B.C. The prophecy therefore falls between 663 and 606.

The fixing of the precise date depends on two considerations : (1) whether the allusion to Thebes in iii. 8–10 implies that its capture was very recent, and (2) whether we must suppose that the prophecy was inspired by a definite historical situation. It is usually felt that the reference to Thebes implies that the memory of its capture is fresh, and that the prophecy must stand very near it—not later perhaps than 650 ; and just about this time there was a Babylonian rebellion against Assyria. This date must be regarded as by no means impossible On the whole, however, a later date appears to be distinctly more probable The last few verses, iii. 12f.,

18f., imply the thorough weakness, disorganization and impending dissolution of the Assyrian empire, and so early a date as 650 hardly meets the case. We must apparently come down to the time when the fate of Nineveh was obviously inevitable and her conqueror was on the way, ii. 1. Probably Marti is not far from the truth in suggesting 610 B.C. The reference to Thebes is intelligible even at this later date, when we remember that the capture of so strong a city, already famous in Homer's time, must have left an indelible impression on the mind of Western Asia. It is nod oubt abstractly possible that the prophecy is not intimately connected with any historical situation, and therefore might be much earlier ; but to say nothing of the concreteness of the detail, such a supposition would be altogether contrary to the analogy of Hebrew prophecy. When Jehovah reveals His secret to the prophets, it is because He is about to do something (Amos iii. 7).

The concreteness of detail just alluded to is characteristic only of the second and third chapters. Ch. i., however, is confessedly vague, and moves for the most part along the familiar lines of theophanic descriptions. It is not plain in i. (cf. ii. 8) who are the enemies to be destroyed, as i. 1 is probably a later addition. Further, as far as *v.* 10 the prophecy is alphabetic : this circumstance has given rise to the view that i., ii. 2 originally formed a complete alphabetic psalm whose second half has either been worked over, or displaced by i. 11–15, ii. 2, the object of the psalm being to present a general picture of the judgment into which the particular doom of Nineveh is fitted, and to give the prophecy a theological com-

plexion which it appeared to need. The acknowledged vagueness of the chapter and the demonstrably alphabetic nature of at least part of it, certainly render its authenticity very doubtful.

The theological interest of Nahum is great. It is the first prophecy dealing exclusively with the enemies of Judah. There is a hint of the sin of Nineveh, but little more than a hint, iii. 1, 4; she is the enemy and oppressor of Judah, and that is enough to justify her doom. Whether we accept the earlier or the later date for the prophecy, the reign of Manasseh or that of Josiah, the moral condition of Judah herself was deplorable enough, and so clear-eyed a prophet as Jeremiah saw that her doom was inevitable. Nahum probably represents the sentiment of the narrowly patriotic party, which regarded Jerusalem as inviolable, and Jehovah as a jealous God ready to take vengeance upon the enemies of Judah.

Habakkuk

THE precise interpretation of the book of Habakkuk presents unusual difficulties; but, brief and difficult as it is, it is clear that Habakkuk was a great prophet, of earnest, candid soul, and he has left us one of the noblest and most penetrating words in the history of religion, ii. 4*b*. The prophecy may be placed about the year 600 B.C. The Assyrian empire had fallen, and by the battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C., Babylonian supremacy was practically established over Western Asia. Josiah's reformation, whose effects had been transient and superficial, lay more than twenty years behind. The reckless Jehoiakim was upon the throne of Judah, a king who regarded neither the claims of justice (Jer. xxii. 13–19) nor the words of the prophet (Jer. xxxvi. 23), and his rebellion drew upon him and his land the terrible vengeance of Babylon, first in 601 B.C., then in 597.

The prophet begins by asking his God how long the lamentable disorder and wrong are to continue, i. 1–4. For answer, he is assured that the Chaldeans are to be raised up in chastisement, who, with their terrible army, will mockingly defy every attempt to check their advance, i. 5–11. But in i. 12–17 the prophet appears to be con-

founded by their impiety; they have been guilty of barbarous cruelty—how can Jehovah reconcile this with His own holiness and purity? The prophet finds the answer to his question when he climbs his tower of faith; there he learns that the proud shall perish and the righteous live. The solution may be long delayed, but faith sees and grasps it already: "The just shall live by his faithfulness," ii. 1–4. Then follows a series of woes, ii. 5–20, which expand the thought of ii. 4*a*—the sure destruction of the proud. Woes are denounced upon the cruel rapacity of the conquerors, their unjust accumulation of treasure, their futile ambitions, their unfeeling treatment of the land, beasts and people, and finally their idolatry. In contrast to the stupid and impotent gods worshipped by the oppressor is the great God of Israel, whose temple is in the heavens, and before whom the earth is summoned to silence, ii. 20. For He is on His way to take vengeance upon the enemies of His people, as He did in the ancient days of the exodus, when He came in the terrors of the storm and overthrew the Egyptians. His coming is described in terms of older theophanies (Jud. v., Deut. xxxiii.); and this "prayer," as it is called in the superscription, concludes with an expression of unbounded confidence and joy in Jehovah, even when all customary and visible signs of His love fail (iii.).

Simple and coherent as this sequence seems to be, it is, in reality, on closer inspection, very perplexing. Ch. i. 1–4 reveals a picture of confusion within Judah, but it is impossible to say whether it is foreigners who are oppressing Judah as a whole,

or powerful classes within Judah itself that are oppressing the poor. Perhaps the latter is the more natural interpretation. In that case, the Chaldeans are raised up to chastise the native oppressor, i. 5–11. This section, however, has fresh difficulties of its own; *vv.* 5, 6 suggest that the Chaldeans are not yet known to be a formidable power, they are only about to be raised up, *v.* 6, and what they will do is as yet incredible, *v.* 5. The minute description which follows, however, looks as if their military appearance and methods were thoroughly familiar. Assuming that i. 12–17 is the continuation of i. 5–11—and the descriptions are very similar—the Chaldeans, whose coming was the answer to the prophet's prayer, now constitute a fresh problem; they swallow up those who are more righteous than themselves, *v.* 13, i.e. Judah. It cannot be denied that such a characterization of Judah sounds strange after the charge levelled at her in i. 1–4, unless we assume an interval of time between the sections, or at least that in i. 12–17, Judah is regarded as relatively righteous, i.e. in comparison with the Chaldeans.

The situation is further complicated by the very close resemblance that prevails between i. 1–4 and i. 12–17. The very same words for *righteous* and *wicked* occur in i. 13 as in i. 4; do they or do they not designate the same persons? If they do, then, as in i. 12–17, the wicked oppressor is almost certainly the Chaldean and the righteous is Judah, and we shall have to interpret the confusion pictured in i. 2–4 as due to the Chaldean suzerainty, and perhaps to assign the section to a period after the

first capture of Jerusalem in 597 B.C. In that case, as it is obvious that the Chaldeans could not be raised up to execute divine judgment upon themselves, the section, i. 5–11, would have to be regarded as an independent piece, whether Habakkuk's or not, announcing the rise of the Chaldeans, and not inappropriately placed here, considering that the sections on both sides of it have the Chaldeans for their theme. On the other hand, however, it may be urged that the identification of the righteous and wicked in i. 13 with i. 4, though natural,[1] is not necessary; and by denying it the prophecy becomes distinctly more coherent. The wrong done by Judah, i. 1–4, is avenged by the coming of the Chaldeans, i. 5–11; they, however, having overstepped the limits of their divine commission, only aggravate the prophet's problem, i. 12–17, and he finally finds the solution on his watch-tower, in the assurance that somehow, despite all seeming delay, the purpose of God is hastening on to its fulfilment, and that the moral constitution of the world is such as to spell the ultimate ruin of cruelty and pride and the ultimate triumph of

[1] Some scholars feel so strongly that the historical background of i. 1–4 and i. 12–17 is the same, that they regard the latter section as the direct continuation of the former. Budde, followed by Cornill, ingeniously supposes that the oppressor in these two sections is the Assyrian (about 615 B.C.), and it is this power that the Chaldeans, i. 5–11, are raised up to chastise. These scholars put i. 5–11 after ii. 4 as a historical amplification of its moral and more indefinite statement. But the strength of Habakkuk rather seems to lie in this, that he abandons the immediate historical solution, i. 5, and is content with the moral one, ii. 4, though no doubt he belives that the moral solution will realize itself in history.

righteousness, ii. 1–4. His faith was historically justified by the fall of the Babylonian empire in 538 B.C.

The authenticity[1] of some of the woes in ch. ii. may be contested, e.g. *vv.* 12–14, which appears to be a partial reproduction of Jer. li. 58, Isa. xi. 9. It is very improbable that ch. iii. is Habakkuk's: it is not even certain that the poem is a unity. The situation in *vv.* 17–19 (especially *v.* 17) seems different from that in the rest of the chapter: there an enemy was feared, here rather infertility. Again the general temper of the ode is hardly that of ii. 3, 4. There the vision was to be delayed, here the interposition seems to be impatiently awaited and expected soon. If "thine anointed" in iii. 13 refers to the people—and the parallelism makes this almost certain—then the days of the monarchy are over and the poem cannot be earlier than the exile. Probably, as the superscription, subscription, and threefold *Selah* suggest, we have here a post-exilic psalm. The psalm, however, is fittingly enough associated with the prophecy of Habakkuk. Its belief in the accomplishment of the divine purpose and its emphasis on a faith independent of the things of sight, are akin in spirit, though not in form to ii. 4.

Patience and faith are the watch-words of Habak-

[1] Marti explains the book thus: (*a*) i. 2–4, 12*a*, 13, ii. 1–4, a psalm, belonging to the fifth or perhaps the second century, giving the divine answer to the plaint that judgment is delayed; (*b*) i. 5–11, 12*b*, 14–17, a prophecy about 605 B.C. dealing with the effect of the battle of Carchemish; (*c*) ii. 5–19, the woes: about 540, when the Chaldean empire is nearing its end; (*d*) iii., a post-exilic psalm.

kuk, ii. 3, 4. There was a time when he had expected an adequate historical solution to his doubts in his own day, i. 5 ; but, as he contemplates the immoral progress of the Chaldeans, he recognizes his difficulty to be only aggravated by this solution, and he is content to commit the future to God. He is comforted and strengthened by a larger vision of the divine purpose and its inevitable triumph—if not now, then hereafter. "Though it tarry, wait for it, for it is sure to come, it will not lag behind." That purpose wills the triumph of justice, and though the righteous may seem to perish, in reality he lives, and shall continue to live, by his faithfulness.

Zephaniah

If the Hezekiah who was Zephaniah's great-great-grandfather, i. 1, was, as is probable, the king of that name, then Zephaniah was a prince as well as a prophet, and this may lend some point to his denunciation of the princes who imitated foreign customs, i. 8. He prophesied in the reign of Josiah, i. 1, and the fact that he censures not the king but the king's children, i. 8, points to the period when Josiah was still a minor (about or before 626 B.C.). With this coincides his description of the moral and religious condition of Judah, which necessitates a date prior to the reformation in 621. Idolatry, star-worship and impure Jehovah-worship are rampant, i. 4, 5, 9. The rich are easy-going and indifferent to religion, supposing that God will leave the world to itself, i. 12. The people of Jerusalem are incorrigible, iii. 2, reckless of the lessons that God has written in nature and history, iii. 5ff. ; their leaders—princes, prophets, priests—are immoral or incompetent. The prophecy may be placed between 630 and 626, and the prophet must have been a young man.

To this idolatrous and indifferent people he announces the speedy coming of the day of Jehovah, whose terrors he describes with a certain solemn

grandeur (i.). The judgment is practically inevitable, i. 18, but it may perhaps yet be averted by an earnest quest of Jehovah, ii. 1–3. That judgment will sweep along the coast through the Philistine country, ii. 4–7, and on to Egypt, and afterwards turn northwards and utterly destroy Assyria with her great capital Nineveh, ii. 12–15. Again the prophet turns to Jerusalem, and for the sins of her people and their leaders proclaims a general day of judgment, from which, however, the humble will be saved, iii. 1–13 (except *vv.* 9, 10.). The book ends with a fine vision of the latter days, when the dispersed of Judah will be restored to their own land, and rejoice in the omnipotent love of their God, iii. 14–20.

The prophecy presents a very impressive picture of the day of Jehovah, but it cannot all be from the pen of Zephaniah. Besides adopting a very different attitude towards Jerusalem from the rest of the prophecy, iii. 14–20 clearly presupposes the exile, *v.* 19, towards the end of which it was probably written. Ch. ii. 11, iii. 9, 10, containing ideas which are hardly earlier than Deutero-Isaiah, are also probably exilic or post-exilic. The oracle against Moab and Ammon, ii. 8–10, countries which lay off the line of the Scythian march southwards from Philistia, *v.* 7, to Egypt, *v.* 12, are for linguistic, contextual, and other reasons, also probably late.

Prophecy has practically always an historical occasion, and the thought of the black and terrible day of Jehovah was no doubt suggested to Zephaniah by the formidable bands of roving Scythians which scoured Western Asia about this time, sweeping

all before them (Hdt. i. 105). They do not seem to have touched Judah; but it is not surprising that men like Jeremiah and Zephaniah should have regarded them as divinely ordained ministers of vengeance upon Jehovah's degenerate people.

Haggai

THE post-exilic age sharply distinguished itself from the pre-exilic (Zech. i. 4), and nowhere is the difference more obvious than in prophecy. Post-exilic prophecy has little of the literary or moral power of earlier prophecy, but it would be very easy to do less than justice to Haggai. His prophecy is very short; into two chapters is condensed a summary, probably not even in his own words, of no less than four addresses. Meagre as they may seem to us, they produced a great effect on those who heard them.

The addresses were delivered between September and December in the year 520 B.C. The people were suffering from a drought, and in the first address, i. 1–11, Haggai interprets this as a penalty for their indifference to religion—in particular, for their neglect to build the temple. The effect of the appeal was that three weeks afterwards a beginning was made upon the building, i. 12–15. The people, however, seem to be discouraged by the scantiness of their resources, and a month afterwards Haggai has to appeal to them again, reminding them that with the silver and the gold, which are His, Jehovah will soon make the new temple more glorious than the old, ii. 1–9. Two months later the pro-

phet again reminds them that, as their former unholy indifference had infected all their life with failure, so loyal devotion to the work now would ensure success and blessing, ii. 10–19; and on the same day Haggai assures Zerubbabel a unique place in the Messianic kingdom which is soon to be ushered in, ii. 20–23.

The appeals of Haggai and Zechariah were successful (Ezra v. 1, vi. 14), and within four years the temple was rebuilt (Ezra vi. 15). It was now the centre of national life, and therefore also of prophetic interest. Haggai was probably not himself a priest, but in so short a prophecy his elaborate allusion to ritual is very significant, ii. 11ff. This prophecy, like pre-exilic prophecy, was no doubt conditioned by the historical situation. The allusion to the shaking of the world in ii. 7, 22, appears to be a reflection of the insurrections which broke out all over the Persian empire on the accession of Darius to the throne in 521 B.C.; and probably the Jews were encouraged by the general commotion to make a bold bid for the re-establishment of an independent national life. That they cherished the ambition of being once more a political as well as a religious force, seems to be suggested by the frequency with which Haggai links the name of Zerubbabel, of the royal line of Judah, with that of Joshua the high priest; and, in particular, by the extraordinary language applied to him—in ii. 23 he is the elect of Jehovah, His servant and signet. Clearly he is to be king in the Messianic kingdom which is to issue out of the convulsion of the world.

It cannot be safely inferred from ii. 3 that Haggai was among those who had seen the temple of Solomon and was therefore a very old man. Simple as are his words, his faith is strong and his hope very bold. Considering the meagre resources of the post-exilic community, it is touching to note the confidence with which he assures the people that Jehovah will bring together the treasures of the world to make His temple glorious.

Zechariah

Chapters i.–viii.

Two months after Haggai had delivered his first address to the people in 520 B.C., and a little over a month after the building of the temple had begun (Hag. i. 15), Zechariah appeared with another message of encouragement. How much it was needed we see from the popular despondency reflected in Hag. ii. 3. Jerusalem is still disconsolate (Zech. i. 17), there has been fasting and mourning, vii. 5, the city is without walls, ii. 5, the population scanty, ii. 4, and most of the people are middle-aged, few old or young, viii. 4, 5. The message they need is one of consolation and encouragement, and that is precisely the message that Zechariah brings: "I have determined in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; fear not," viii. 15.

The message of Zechariah comes in the peculiar form of visions, some of them resting apparently on Babylonian art, and not always easy to interpret. After an earnest call to repentance, i. 1–6, the visions begin, i. 7–vi. 8. In the first vision, i. 7–17, the earth, which has been troubled, is at rest; the advent of the Messianic age may therefore

be expected soon. The divine promise is given that Jerusalem shall be graciously dealt with and the temple rebuilt. The second is a vision, i. 18–21, of the annihilation of the heathen world represented by four horns. The third vision (ii.)—that of a young man with a measuring-rod—announces that Jerusalem will be wide and populous, the exiles will return to it, and Jehovah will make His abode there.

These first three visions have to do, in the main, with the city and the people; the next two deal more specifically with the leaders of the restored community on its civil and religious side, Zerubbabel the prince and Joshua the priest. In the fourth vision (iii.) Joshua is accused by the Adversary and the accuser is rebuked—symbolic picture of the misery of the community and its imminent redemption. Joshua is to have full charge of the temple, and he and his priests are the guarantee that the Branch, i.e. the Messianic king (Jer. xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15), no doubt Zerubbabel (Zech, iii. 8, vi. 12; Hag. ii. 23), is coming. In the fifth vision (iv.)[1] the prophet sees a lampstand with seven lamps and an olive tree on either side, the trees representing the two anointed leaders, Zerubbabel and Joshua, enjoying the divine protection.

The next two visions elaborate the promise of iii. 9: "I will remove the iniquity of that land,"—and indicate the removal of all that taints the land of Judah, alike sin and sinners. The flying roll of

[1] Except *vv.* 6*b*–10*a*, which appears to be a special assurance, hardly here in place, that Zerubbabel would finish the temple which he had begun.

the sixth vision, v. 1–4, carries the curse that will fall upon thieves and perjurers; and in the somewhat grotesque figure of the seventh vision, v. 5–11, Sin is personified as a woman and borne away in a closed cask by two women with wings like storks, to the land of Shinar, i.e. Babylon, there to work upon the enemy of Judah the ruin she has worked for Judah herself. In the last vision, vi. 1–8, which is correlate with the first—four chariots issuing from between two mountains of brass—the divine judgment is represented as being executed upon the north country, i.e. the country opposed to God, and particularly Babylonia.

The cumulative effect of the visions is very great. All that hinders the coming of the Messianic days is to be removed, whether it be the great alien world powers or the sinners within Jerusalem itself. The purified city will be blessed with prosperity of every kind, and over her civil and religious affairs will be two leaders, who enjoy a unique measure of the divine favour. In an appendix to the visions vi. 9–15, Zechariah is divinely commissioned to make a crown for Zerubbabel (or for him and Joshua)[1] out of the gold and silver brought by

[1] It seems practically certain that the original prophecy in *v.* 11 has been subsequently modified, doubtless because it was not fulfilled. The last clause of *v.* 13—"the counsel of peace shall be between them *both*"—shows that two persons have just been mentioned. The preceding clause must therefore be translated, not as in A. V. and R. V., "and *he* shall be a priest upon his throne," as if the office of king and priest were to be combined in a single person, but "and *there* shall be" (or, as Wellhausen suggests, "and *Joshua* shall be") "a priest upon his throne," (or no doubt more correctly, with the Septuagint, "a priest *at his right hand*"). As two persons are involved, and the

emissaries of the Babylonian Jews, and the hope is expressed that peace will prevail between the leaders—a hope through which we may perhaps read a growing rivalry.

The concluding chapters of the prophecy (vii., viii.), delivered two years later than the rest of the book, vii. 1, are occupied with the ethical conditions of the impending Messianic kingdom. To the question whether the fast-days which commemorated the destruction of Jerusalem are still to be observed, Zechariah answers that the ancient demands of Jehovah had nothing to do with fasting, but with justice and mercy. As former disobedience had been followed by a divine judgment, so would obedience now be rewarded with blessing, fast-days would be turned into days of joy and gladness, and the blessing would be so great that representatives of every nation would be attracted to Jerusalem, to worship the God of the Jews.

In Zechariah even more than in Haggai it is clear

word "crowns" in *v.* 11 is in the plural, it has been supposed that the verse originally read, "set the crowns *upon the head of Zerubbabel and* upon the head of Joshua." On the other hand, in *v.* 14 the word "crown" must be read in the singular, and should probably also be so read in *v.* 11 (though even the plural could refer to one crown). In that case, if there be but one crown, who wears it? Undoubtedly Zerubbabel: he is the Branch, iii. 8, and the Branch is the Davidic king (Jer. xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15). The building of the temple here assigned to the Branch, vi. 12, is elsewhere expressly assigned to Zerubbabel, iv. 9. It is, therefore, he who is crowned: in other words, *v.* 11, may have originally read, "set it *upon the head of Zerubbabel.*" Whether we accept this solution or the other, it seems certain that the original prophecy contemplated the crowning of Zerubbabel. As the hopes that centred upon Zerubbabel were never fulfilled, the passage was subsequently modified to its present form.

that prophecy has entered upon a new stage.[1] There is the same concentration of interest upon the temple, the same faith in the unique importance of Zerubbabel. But the apocalyptic element, though not quite a new thing, is present on a scale altogether new to prophecy. Again, the transcendence of God is acutely felt—the visions have to be interpreted by an angel. We see, too, in the book the rise of the idea of Satan (iii.) and of the conception of sin as an independent force, v. 5–11. The yearning for the annihilation of the kingdoms opposed to Judah, i. 18–21, has a fine counterpart in the closing vision, viii. 22, 23, of the nations flocking to Jerusalem because they have heard that God is there. The book is of great historical value, affording as it does contemporary evidence of the drooping hopes of the early post-exilic community, and of the new manner in which this disappointment was met by prophecy. But, though Zechariah's message was largely concerned with the building of the temple, and was delivered for the most part in terms of vision and apocalyptic, the ethical elements on which the "former prophets" had laid the supreme emphasis, were by no means forgotten, viii. 16, 17.

Chapters ix.–xiv.

Practically all the distinctive features of the first eight chapters disappear in ix.–xiv. The style

[1] Zechariah himself is conscious of the distinction, which is more than a temporal one, between himself and the pre-exilic prophets: notice the manner of his allusion to the "former prophets," i. 4, vii. 7, 12.

and the historical presuppositions are altogether different. There are two new superscriptions, ix. 1, xii. 1, but there is no reference to Zerubbabel, Joshua, or the situation of their time. There the immediate problem was the building of the temple; here, more than once, Jerusalem is represented as in a state of siege. A sketch of the contents will show how unlike the one situation is to the other.

The general theme of ix. 1–xi. 3 is the destruction of the world-powers and the establishment of the kingdom of God. Judgment is declared at the outset upon Damascus, Phoenicia and Philistia, while Jerusalem is to enjoy the divine protection and to be the seat of the Messianic King, ix. 1–9. Greece, the great enemy, will be overcome by Judah and Ephraim, who are but weapons in Jehovah's hand, ix. 10–17. Then follows[1] a passage in which "the shepherds" are threatened with a dire fate. Judah receives a promise of victory, and Ephraim is assured that her exiles will be gathered and brought home from Egypt and Assyria to Gilead and Lebanon; the cedars of Lebanon and the oaks of Bashan—types perhaps of foreign rulers—will be laid low, x. 3–xi. 3.

The next section is of a different kind. In it the prophet is divinely commissioned to tend the flock which has been neglected and impoverished by other shepherds. To this end he takes two staves, named Favour and Unity, to indicate respectively the favour enjoyed by Judah in her relations with

[1] Ch. x. 1, 2 appears to stand by itself. It is an injunction to bring the request for rain to Jehovah and to put no faith in teraphim and diviners.

her neighbours, and the unity subsisting between her and Israel (or Jerusalem, according to two codices); and thus invested with the instruments of the pastoral office he destroyed three shepherds in a short time. But the flock grew tired of him, and, in consequence he broke the staves, i.e. the relations of favour and unity were ruptured. A foolish and careless shepherd is then raised up, who abuses the flock, and over him a woe is pronounced, xi. 4–17, more minutely defined in xiii. 7–9, which appears to have been misplaced. Jehovah will slay the shepherd and scatter the sheep; a third of the flock after being purified by fire will constitute the people of Jehovah.

The next section, xii. 1–xiii. 6, introduces us to a siege of Jerusalem by the heathen, abetted by Judah. Suddenly, however, Judah changes sides; by the help of Jehovah they destroy the heathen, and Jerusalem is saved, xii. 1–8. Then the people and their leaders are moved by the outpouring of the spirit to confess and entreat forgiveness for some judicial murder which they have committed and which they publicly and bitterly lament, xii. 9–14. The prayer is answered; people and leaders are cleansed in a fountain opened, with the result that idolatry and prophecy of the ancient public type are abjured, xiii. 1–6.

The theme of the last section also (xiv.) is a heathen attack upon Jerusalem, but this time the city is destroyed and half the inhabitants exiled. Then Jehovah intervenes, and by a miracle upon the Mount of Olives the rest of the people effect their escape, and Jehovah fights with all His angels

against the heathen. Those glorious Messianic days, when Jehovah will be King over all the earth, will know no heat or cold, or change from light to darkness. Jerusalem will be secure and the land about her level and fruitful, watered east and west by a living stream. Those who have made war against her will waste away, while the rest of the world will make pilgrimages to the holy city to worship Jehovah and celebrate the feast of booths. Then the mighty war-horses, once the object of His hatred, will be consecrated to His service, and the number of pilgrims will be so great that every pot in the city and in the province of Judah will be needed for ceremonial purposes.

Few problems in the Old Testament are more perplexing than that of the origin and relation of the sections composing, ix.–xiv. to one another. The utmost that can be said with comparative certainty is that the prophecy, in its present form, is post-exilic, while certain elements in it, especially in ix.–xi., are, if not pre-exilic, at any rate imitations or reminiscences of pre-exilic prophecy. Many scholars even deny that ix.–xiv. is a unity and assign it to at least two authors. Though the superscription in xii. 1, which seems to justify this distinction, was probably added, like Malachi i. 1, by a later hand, the presence of certain broad distinctions between ix.–xi. and xii.–xiv. can hardly be denied. In the former section, Ephraim is occasionally mentioned in combination with Judah, cf. ix. 13 ; in the latter, Judah alone is mentioned, and partly, on the strength of this, the former section

is assigned to a period between Tiglath Pileser's invasion of the north of Palestine in 734 (xi. 1–3) and the fall of the northern kingdom in 721, while the latter is assigned to a period between the death of Josiah in 609, to which the mourning in Megiddo is supposed to allude, xii. 11, and the fall of the southern kingdom in 586.

Even within these sections there are differences which are held to be incompatible with the unity of each section. The most notable difference is perhaps that affecting the siege of Jerusalem. In ch. xii. the heathen are destroyed before Jerusalem, while the city itself remains secure ; in ch. xiv. the houses are rifled, the women ravished, and half of the people go into captivity before Jehovah intervenes to protect the remainder. These and other differences are unmistakable, yet it may be questioned whether they are so serious as to be fatal to the unity of the whole section, ix.–xiv. It is not impossible that they may be due to the eclectic spirit of an author who gathered from many quarters material for his eschatological pictures. Besides, the sections which have been by some scholars relegated to different authors, occasionally seem to imply each other. The general assault on Jerusalem in ch. xii., e.g., is the natural result of the breaking of the staves, Favour and Unity, in ch. xi. But, even if ix.–xiv. be a unity, it is well to remember, as Cornill reminds us, that there is "much in these chapters which will ever remain obscure and unintelligible, because our knowledge of the whole post-exilic and especially of the early Hellenic period is extremely deficient."

This leads to the question of date. The last section (xii.–xiv.) at any rate is obviously post-exilic. The idea of the general assault on Jerusalem is undoubtedly suggested by Ezekiel xxxviii.; the curiously condemnatory attitude to prophecy in xiii. 2–6 would have been impossible in pre-exilic times; the phrase, "Uzziah *king of Judah*," xiv. 5, rather implies that the dynasty is past, and the reference to the earthquake in his reign has the flavour of a learned reminiscence.[1] These and other circumstances practically necessitate a post-exilic date, and the objection based upon xii. 11 falls to the ground, as that verse alludes, in all probability, not to lamentations for the death of Josiah, which would no doubt have taken place in Jerusalem, but to laments which accompanied the worship of the Semitic Adonis. Nor can any objection be grounded upon the allusion to idolatry in xiii. 2, as idolatry persisted into post-exilic times.[2]

If ix.–xiv. be a unity, a definite *terminus a quo* is provided in ix. 13 by the mention of the Greeks, whose sons are opposed to the sons of Zion. Such a relation of Jews to Greeks is not conceivable before the time of Alexander the Great, and this fact alone would throw the prophecy, at the earliest, into the fourth century B.C. But there are other facts which seem to some to make for a pre-exilic date: e.g. the mention of Judah and Ephraim together, ix. 13 (cf. ix. 10), seems to presuppose the existence

[1] Even if the earliest possible date (about 600) for this section be accepted, the earthquake had taken place a century and a half before.

[2] Cf. Job xxxi. 26ff. and perhaps also Ps. xvi.

of both kingdoms, and Egypt and Assyria are placed side by side, x. 10, 11, precisely in the manner of Hosea (ix. 3, xi. 5). But these facts, significant as they may seem, are by no means decisive in favour of a pre-exilic date. Assyria was the first great world power with which Israel came into hostile contact, and the name was not unnaturally transferred by later ages to the hostile powers of their own day—to Babylon in Lam. v. 6, to Persia in Ezra vi. 22, and possibly to Syria in Isaiah xxvii. 13. Consequently, in a context which assigns the passage, at the earliest, to the Greek period, Assyria and Egypt would very naturally designate the Seleucid and Ptolemaic kingdoms respectively, and the prophecy might be safely relegated to the third century, B.C.[1] The allusion to Ephraim is not incompatible with this date, for the prophecy presupposes a general dispersion, x. 9, which must be later than the fall of Judah in 586, considering that residence in Egypt, x. 10, is implied (cf. Jer. xlii.–xliv.). Nothing more need be implied by the allusion to Ephraim than that there will be a general restoration of all the tribes that were once driven into exile and are now scattered throughout the world.

If chs. ix.–xiv. belong to the third century B.C.,

[1] Marti puts it as late as 160. One of the most important clues would be furnished by xi. 8—"I cut off the three shepherds in one month"—if the reference were not so cryptic. Advocates of a pre-exilic date find in the words an allusion to three successors of Jeroboam II. of Israel—Zechariah, Shallum and some unknown pretender (about 740); others, to the rapid succession of high priests before the Maccabean wars (about 170). One month probably signifies generally a brief time.

they give us an interesting glimpse into the aspirations and defects of later Judaism. They reveal an unbounded faith in the importance of Jerusalem, and in the certainty of its triumph over the assaults of heathenism ; on the other hand, they are inspired by a fine universalism, xiv. 16ff. But this universalism has a distinctly Levitical and legalistic colouring, xiv. 21. Membership in the kingdom of God involves abstinence from food proscribed by the Levitical law, ix. 7 ; and even for the heathen the worship of Jehovah takes the form of the celebration of the feast of booths, xiv. 16. There is in the prophecy a noble appreciation of the world-wide destiny of the true religion, but hardly of its essentially spiritual nature.

Malachi

It is not inappropriate that Malachi,[1] though not the latest of the prophets, should close the prophetic collection. The concluding words of this book, which predict the coming of the great prophet Elijah, iv. 5f., and the apocalyptic tone of Malachi, show that prophecy feels itself unable to cope adequately with the moral situation and is conscious of its own decline. Here, as in Haggai, interest gathers round ritual rather than moral obligation, though the latter is not neglected, iii. 5, and the religion for which Malachi pleads is far from being exhausted by ritual. He takes a lofty view, approaching to Jesus' own, of the obligations of the marriage relation, ii. 16; and perfunctory ritual he abhors, chiefly because it expresses a deep-seated indifference to God and His claims, iii. 8. The clergy or the laity who offer God their lame or blemished beasts are guilty of an offence that goes deeper than ritual. Their whole ideal of religion and service is insulting; they have forgotten that Jehovah is "a great King," i. 14.

The prophecy of Malachi is closely knit together.

[1] Ch. i. 1 is late, modelled, like Zech. xii. 1 on Zech. ix. 1. The word Malachi has no doubt been suggested by *Malachi* in iii. 1 (= my messenger). The prophecy is really anonymous.

Addressing a people who doubt the love of their God, he begins by pointing—strangely enough from the Christian standpoint, but intelligibly enough from that of early post-exilic Judaism—to the desolation of Edom, Judah's enemy (cf. Obadiah) in proof of that love, i. 2–5, and asks how Judah has responded to it. The priests present inferior offerings, thus forming, in their insulting indifference, a strange contrast to the untutored heathen hearts all the world over, which offer God pure service ; they have put to shame the ancient ideals, i. 6–ii. 9. The people, too, are as guilty as the priests ; for they had divorced their faithful Jewish wives who had borne them children, and married foreign women who were a menace to the purity of the national religion, ii. 10–16. Those who are beginning to doubt the moral order because Jehovah does not manifestly interpose as the God of justice, are assured by the prophet that the Lord, preceded by a messenger, is on His way ; and He will punish, first the unfaithful priests, and then the unfaithful people, ii. 17–iii. 5. His apparent indifference to the people is due to their real indifference to Him ; if they bring in the tithes, the blessing will come, iii. 6–12. As before, ii. 17ff., the despondent are assured that Jehovah has not forgotten them ; He is writing their names in a book, and when He comes in judgment, the faithful will be spared, and then the difference between the destinies of the good and the bad will be plain for all to see. The wicked shall be trampled under foot, and upon the dark world in which the upright mourn shall arise the sun, from whose gentle rays will stream healing for

bruised minds and hearts, iii. 13–iv. 4. Before that day Elijah will come to heal the dissensions of the home, iv. 5, 6. (cf. ii. 14).

The atmosphere of the book of Malachi is very much like that of Ezra-Nehemiah. The same problems emerge in both—foreign marriages, neglect of payment of tithes, etc. But the allusion to the presents given the governor, i. 8, shows that the book was not written during the governorship of Nehemiah, who claims to have accepted no presents (Neh. v. 14–18). On the other hand, the state of affairs presented by the book is inconceivable after the measures adopted by Ezra and Nehemiah; therefore, Malachi must precede them. Probably however, not by much; it was Malachi and others like-minded who prepared the way for the reformation, and his date may be roughly fixed at 460–450 B.C. Consistently with this, the priests are designated Levites, ii. 4, iii. 3, as in Deuteronomy; the book must therefore precede the priestly code which sharply distinguishes priests and Levites.

There is an unusual proportion of dialogue in Malachi. Good men are perplexed by the anomalies of the moral order, and they are not afraid to debate them. Malachi's solution is largely, though not exclusively, iii. 8–12, apocalyptic; and though in this, as in his emphasis on the cult, iii. 4, and his attitude to Edom, i. 2ff., he stands upon the level of ordinary Judaism, in other respects he rises far above it. Coming from one to whom correct ritual meant so much, his utterance touching heathen worship is not only refreshingly, but astonishingly

bold. In all the Old Testament, there is no more generous outlook upon the foreign world than that of i. 11. Though the priests of the temple at Jerusalem insult the name of Jehovah and are wearied with His service, yet " from sunrise to sunset My name is great among the (heathen) nations, and in every place pure offerings are offered to My name ; for great is My name among the heathen, saith Jehovah of hosts."

Psalms

THE piety of the Old Testament Church is reflected with more clearness and variety in the Psalter than in any other book of the Old Testament. It constitutes the response of the Church to the divine demands of prophecy, and, in a less degree, of law; or, rather, it expresses those emotions and aspirations of the universal heart which lie deeper than any formal demand. It is the speech of the soul face to face with God. Its words are as simple and unaffected as human words can be, for it is the genius of Hebrew poetry to lay little stress upon artifices of rhyme and rhythm. By its simple device of parallelism, it suggests a rhythm profounder than the sound of any words—the response of thought to thought, the calling of deep to deep, the solemn harmonies that run throughout the universe. Whether the second thought of a verse is co-ordinate with the first, as—

> Let us break their bands asunder,
> And cast away their cords from us, ii 3.

or contrasted with it, as—

> Jehovah knows the way of the righteous,
> But the way of the ungodly shall perish, i. 6,

the resulting parallelism is essentially simple, and

the Hebrew poet can express his profoundest thoughts and feelings with lucidity and freedom. It is the depth and sincerity of its emotion, coupled with this unrivalled simplicity of expression that has given the Psalter its abiding-place in the religious history of humanity.

With the partial exception of Psalm xlv., which is a marriage song, the songs of the Psalter are exclusively religious. Indeed most of the poetry of the Old Testament is religious; the Song of Deborah, e.g. (Jud. v.), or the Psalm of Hezekiah (Isa. xxxviii.). But, from scattered hints it is abundantly plain that, especially before the exile, Hebrew poetry must have ranged over a wide variety of themes. So far as we know, the Hebrews never had an epic; and though a certain epic power is occasionally suggested by the extant literature, it may be doubted whether the Hebrew genius, which was essentially lyrical, would have been capable of the long sustained effort demanded by a great epic. But the lyrical genius of the Hebrew found abundant opportunity in life's common joys, sorrows and activities. Victories in battle were celebrated in ballads, which made the blood leap, love songs were sung at weddings, and dirges were chanted over the dead. The labour of drawing water, of reaping the fields or gathering the vintage, was relieved by snatches of song. There was all this and more, but it has nearly all perished, leaving little more than an echo, because the men who compiled and edited the Old Testament were dominated by an exclusively religious interest.

But if the interest of the Psalter be exclusively

religious, we have no reason to complain of its variety. From the deepest despair to the highest exaltation, every mood of the soul is uttered there. Many a classification of the Psalter has been attempted, e.g. into (*a*) psalms of gladness, such as thanksgiving (xlvi.), adoration (viii.) ; (*b*) psalms of sadness, such as lamentation (lxxiv.), confession (li.), supplication (cii.) ; (*c*) psalms of reflection, such as the occasional didactic poetry (cxix.), or discussions of the moral order (lxxiii.). But in the nature of the case, no classification can ever hope to be completely satisfactory, if for no other reason than that the psalms, being for the most part lyrics, are often marked by subtle and rapid changes of feeling, passing sometimes, as in Psalm xxii., from the most touching laments to the most daring expressions of hope and gladness. The following classification, though exposed, as all such classifications must be, to the charge of cross-division, will afford a working basis for the study of the Psalter :—

(1) Psalms of Adoration, including (*a*) adoration of God for His revelation in nature, viii., xix. 1–6, xxix., civ. ; (*b*) adoration of Him for His love to His people, xxxiii., ciii., cxi., cxiii., cxv., cxvii., cxlvii. ; (*c*) praise of His glorious kingdom, cxlv., cxlvi., ending with the call to universal praise, cxlviii., cl.

(2) Psalms of Reflection (*a*) upon the moral order of the world, ix., x., xi., xiv. xxxvi., xxxvii., xxxix., xlix., lii., lxii., lxxiii., lxxv. lxxxii., xc., xcii., xciv. ; (*b*) upon Divine Providence, xvi., xxiii., xxxiv., xci., cxii., cxxi., cxxv., cxxvii., cxxviii., cxxxiii., cxxxix., cxliv. 12–15 ; (*c*) on the value of

Scripture, i., xix. 7–14, cxix. ; (*d*) on the nature of the ideal man, xv., xxiv. 1–6, l.

(3) Psalms of Thanksgiving, most of them for historical deliverances, e.g. from the exile, or from the Syrians in the second century B.C., xxx., xl., xlvi., xlviii., lxv., lxvi., lxvii., lxviii., lxxvi., cxvi., cxviii., cxxiv., cxxvi., cxxix., cxxxviii., cxliv. 1–11, cxlix.

(4) Psalms in Celebration of Worship, v., xxiv., 7–10, xxvi., xxvii., xlii.–xliii., lxxxiv., cxxii., cxxxiv.

(5) Historical Psalms (*a*) emphasizing the unfaithfulness of the people, lxxviii., lxxxi., cvi. ; (*b*) emphasizing the love or power of God, cv., cxiv., cxxxv., cxxxvi.

(6) Imprecatory Psalms, lviii., lix., lxix., lxxxiii., cix., cxxxvii.

(7) Penitential Psalms, vi., xxxii., xxxviii., li., cii., cxxx., cxliii.

(8) Psalms of Petition (*a*) prayers for deliverance, preservation or restoration, iii., iv., vii., xii., xiii., xvii., xxv., xxxi., xxxv., xli., xliv., liv., lv., lx., lxiv., lxxi., lxxiv., lxxvii., lxxix., lxxx., lxxxv., lxxxvi., lxxxviii., cxx., cxxiii., cxxxi., cxl., cxli., cxlii ; (*b*) answered prayers, xxii., xxviii., lvi., lvii.

(9) Royal Psalms (*a*) king's coronation, xxi. ; (*b*) marriage, xlv. ; (*c*) prayers for his welfare and success, xx., lxi., lxiii. ; (*d*) his character, lxxii., ci. ; (*e*) dominion, ii., xviii., cx. ; (*f*) yearning for the Messianic King, lxxxix., cxxxii.

(10) Psalms concerning the universal reign of Jehovah, i.e. Messianic psalms in the largest sense of the word, xlvii., lxxxvii., xciii., xcv., xcvi., xcvii., xcviii., xcix., c.

The Psalter has plainly had a long history. In its present form it obviously rests upon groups, which in turn rest upon individual psalms, that are no doubt often far older than the groups in which they stand. Like the Pentateuch, and perhaps in imitation of it, the Psalter is divided into five books, whose close is indicated, in each case, by a doxology (xli., lxxii., lxxxix., cvi.), except in the case of the last psalm, which is itself a doxology (cl.). This division appears to have been artificially effected. Psalm cvii., which starts the last book, goes naturally with cv. and cvi., which close the fourth book ; and the circumstance that the number of psalms in the fourth book corresponds exactly with that of the third, raises a strong suspicion that the break was deliberately made at Psalm cvi. It is very probable, too, that the doxology at the close of Psalm cvi. (cf. 1 Chron. xvi. 36), which differs somewhat from the other doxologies, was originally intended as a doxology to that psalm only, and not to indicate the close of the book. In any case, the contents of books 4 and 5, which are very largely liturgical, are so similar that they may be practically considered as one book.

Books 2 and 3 may also be similarly regarded ; for whereas in books 1, 4 and 5 the name of the divine Being is predominantly Jehovah, in books 2 and 3 it is predominantly Elohim (God), and there can be no doubt that these two books, at least as far as Ps. lxxxiii., have been submitted to an Elohistic redaction. Psalm xiv., *e.g.*, reappears in the 2nd book as Psalm liii. in a form practically identical, except for the name of God,

which is Jehovah in the one (xiv.) and Elohim in the other (liii.) ; the change is, therefore, undoubtedly deliberate. This is also made plain by the presence of such impossible phrases as "God, thy God," xlv. 7, l. 7, instead of the natural and familiar "Jehovah, thy God." Whatever the motive for the choice of this divine name (Elohim) may be, it is so thoroughly characteristic of books 2 and 3 that they may not unfairly be held to constitute a group by themselves. In this way the Psalter falls into three great groups—book 1 (i.–xli.), which is Jehovistic, books 2 and 3 (xlii.–lxxxix.), which are Elohistic, and books 4 and 5 (xc.–cl.), which are Jehovistic..

These greater groups rest, however, upon other smaller ones, some formally acknowledged, e.g. the so-called Psalms of Ascent or Pilgrim psalms (cxx.–cxxxiv.), the Psalms of David, Psalms of the Korahites (xlii.–xlix., etc.), Psalms of Asaph (lxxiii.–lxxxiii., etc.), and others not so obvious in a translation, e.g. the Hallelujah Psalms, cxi.–cxiii., cxlvi.–cl. These groups must often have enjoyed an independent reputation as groups, and even been invested with a certain canonical authority, for occasionally the same psalm appears in two different groups (xiv. = liii., xl. 13–17 = lxx., cviii. = lvii. 7–11 + lx. 6–12). Such repetition proves that the final editors did not consider themselves at liberty to make any change within the groups. The principle of the arrangement of individual psalms within the group was probably not a scientific one : e.g. xxxiv. and xxxv. seem to be placed together for no other reason than that both refer to "the

angel of Jehovah," xxxiv. 7, xxxv. 5. Sometimes a psalm has been wrongly divided into two (cf. xlii., xliii., originally one psalm) and occasionally two psalms have been united, usually for reasons that are transparent (so perhaps xix., the revelation in the heavens and the revelation in the Scriptures, and xxiv., the entrance of Jehovah into His temple, and the essential conditions for the entrance of man).

The original order of the groups themselves appears to have been dislocated. Whoever added the subscription to Psalm lxxii. can hardly have been aware of the eighteen psalms which, in the subsequent books of the Psalter, are ascribed to David; nor is it natural to suppose that the Asaphic (l.) and Korahitic psalms (xlii.–xlix.) stood in the second book when that subscription was written. It is not improbable that Psalms xlii.–l. originally belonged to the third book, along with the Asaphic group, lxxiii.–lxxxiii., and that lxxii. 20, "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended," was intended as the subscription of all the Davidic psalms that had then been collected (Book 1, except Pss. i., ii., x., xxxiii., and book 2, Pss. li.–lxx.).[1] The first two books originally represented a Davidic hymn-book; they probably represent, as a whole, the oldest part of the Psalter.

The problem of the authorship of the Psalms is one of the thorniest in the Old Testament. One hundred psalms are ascribed to definite authors:

[1] Psalms i. and ii. were placed at the beginning as prefatory to the whole Psalter. They deal with the two cardinal points of Judaism—the law and the Messianic hope. Psalms ix. and x. originally constituted *one* alphabetic psalm, and xxxiii. is ascribed to David in the Septuagint.

one is ascribed to Moses (xc.), seventy-three to David, two to Solomon (lxxvii., cxxvii.); and yet there are not a few scholars who maintain that, so far from any psalm being Mosaic, or even Davidic, there is not a single pre-exilic psalm in the Psalter, and the less radical critics do not allow more than thirty or forty. The question must be settled entirely upon internal evidence, as the superscriptions, definite as they often are, are never demonstrably reliable, while some of them are plainly impossible. To begin with, doubt attaches to the meaning of the Hebrew preposition in the phrase, "Psalm *of* David." It is the same preposition as that rendered by *for* in the phrase, "For the chief musician," and as in this phrase authorship is out of the question, it may be seriously doubted whether it is implied in the phrase rendered "Psalm of David." This doubt is corroborated by the phrase, "Psalms of the sons of Korah." Plainly all the Korahites did not cooperate in the composition of the psalms so superscribed; and the most natural inference is that the phrase does not here designate authorship, but that the psalm is one of a collection in some sense belonging to or destined for the Korahitic guild of temple-singers.[1] In that case the phrase would have a liturgical sense, and the parallel phrase "of (or for) David," might have to be similarly explained. It must be confessed, however, that whatever the actual origin of the superscription, "of (or for) David," it certainly came to be regarded as implying author-

[1] It is not absolutely impossible that the phrase might point to a collection composed by this guild, cf. "Moravian brethren." But the other supposition is more likely.

ship—the many historical notices in the superscriptions of Psalms li.–lx. are proof enough of that; and no other explanation is possible of the superscription "of Moses" in Psalm. xc (cf. Is. xxxviii. 9, the writing of Hezekiah).

In later times, then, authorship was plainly intended by the superscriptions. But it is quite certain that the superscriptions themselves are no original and integral parts of the psalms. In the Septuagint they occasionally differ from the Hebrew, assigning psalms that are anonymous in the Hebrew (xcv., cxxxvii.) to David, or to other authors (e.g., cxlvi.–cxlviii. to Haggai and Zechariah. The ease with which psalms were, without warrant, ascribed to David may be seen from the Greek superscription to Psalm xcvi. "When the house [i.e. the temple] was being built after the captivity; a song of David": in other words, an admittedly post-exilic psalm is ascribed to David. The superscriptions were added probably long after the psalms, and there is no reason to suppose that the Hebrews were exempt from the uncritical methods and ideas which characterized the Greek translators. That they shared them is abundantly proved by the historical superscriptions. One at least (Ps. xxxiv.) in substituting the name of Abimelech (Gen. xx.) for Achish (1 Sam. xxi.) shows either ignorance or carelessness, and casts a very lurid light on the reliability of the superscriptions. The contents of other psalms are manifestly irreconcilable with the assumed authorship: Asaph, e.g., whom the Chronicler regards as a contemporary of David (1 Chron. xvi 7), laments in Psalms lxxiv., lxxix. the devastation

of the temple, which was not at that time in existence. The principles on which the superscriptions were added were altogether superficial and uncritical. Psalm cxxvii. is ascribed to Solomon, chiefly because its opening verse speaks of the building of the house, which was understood to be the temple. So Psalm lxiii. is described as " a psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah," simply on the strength of the words, " My soul thirsteth for thee in a dry and weary land where no water is "—words which are taken literally, though they were undoubtedly intended metaphorically. A parallel case is that of the psalm inserted in Jonah ii., obviously a church psalm whose figurative language has been too literally pressed.

Enough has been said to show that the superscriptions are later than the psalms themselves, and often, if not always, unreliable ; we are therefore wholly dependent upon internal evidence, and the criteria for Davidic authorship must be sought outside the Psalter. The only absolutely undisputed poems of David's are the elegy over Saul and Jonathan in 2 Samuel i. and the lament over Abner (2 Sam. iii. 33, 34). There is no means of proving that 2 Samuel xxii. (=Ps. xviii.) and 2 Samuel xxiii. 1–7 are David's, as they are interpolated in a section of Samuel which is itself an interpolation (xxi.–xxiv.), interrupting as it does the continuity of 2 Samuel xx. and 1 Kings i. The data offered by the elegy are much too slender to enable us to decide whether any particular psalm is David's or not. Some have ventured to ascribe a dozen psalms or so to him on the strength of their peculiar vigour and

originality, but obviously all such decisions must be altogether subjective. What is certain is that David was an accomplished musician (1 Sam. xvi. 18) and a great poet (2 Sam. i.), a man of the most varied experience, rich emotional nature and profound religious feeling, a devoted worshipper of Jehovah, and eager to build Him a temple ; and it is not impossible that such a man may have written religious songs, but in the nature of the case it can never be proved that he wrote any of the songs in the Psalter. Psalm xviii. has been by many assigned to him with considerable confidence because of the support it is thought to receive from its appearance in a historical book ; but besides the fact that this support, as we have seen, is slender, the psalm can hardly, at least in its present form, have come from David. The superscription assigns it to a later period in his life when he had been delivered from all his enemies ; but at that time he could not have looked back over the past, stained by his great sin, with the complacency which marks the confession in *vv.* 20–24. Others have supposed that xxiv. 7–10, with its picture of the entrance of Jehovah through the " ancient gates," may well be his. It may be, if the gates are those of the city ; but if, as is more probable, they are the temple gates, then the psalm must be long after the time of Solomon. In the quest for Davidic psalms we can never possibly rise above conjecture. Later ages regarded David as the father of sacred song, just as they regarded Moses as the author of Hebrew law.

There can be little doubt, however, that there are pre-exilic psalms or fragments in the Psalter.

From Psalm cxxxvii. 3, 4 we may safely infer that already, by the time of the exile, there were songs of Jehovah or songs of Zion. We cannot tell what these songs were like; but when we remember that for nearly two centuries before the exile great prophets had been working—and we cannot suppose altogether ineffectually, for they had disciples—it is difficult to see why, granting the poetic power which the Hebrew had from the earliest times, pious spirits should not have expressed themselves in sacred song, or why some of these songs may not be in the Psalter.

We appear to be on tolerably sure ground in at least some of the "royal" psalms. Doubtless it is often very hard to say, as in Psalms ii., lxxii., whether the king is a historical figure or the Messianic King of popular yearning; and possibly (cf. lxxii.) a psalm which originally contemplated a historical king may have been in later times altered or amplified to fit the features of the ideal king. Other psalms, again (e.g., lxxxix., cxxxii.), clearly are the products of a time when the monarchy is no more. But there remain others, expressing, e.g. a wish for the king's welfare (xx., xxi.), which can only be naturally referred to a time when the king was on the throne. It is not absolutely impossible to refer these to the period of the Hasmoneans, who bore the title from the end of the second century B.C.; but the history of the canon renders this supposition extremely improbable. The contents of these psalms are not above pre-exilic possibility, and their position in the first book would, generally speaking, be in favour of the earlier date. Psalm

xlv. also, which celebrates the marriage of a king to a foreign princess, seems almost to compel a pre-exilic date.

Some scholars, struck by the resemblance between many of the sorrowful psalms and the poetry of Jeremiah, have not hesitated to ascribe some of them to him (cf. xl. 2). Such a judgment is necessarily subjective, but there can be little doubt that Jeremiah powerfully influenced Hebrew religious poetry. The Greek superscriptions, again, which assign certain psalms to Haggai and Zechariah, though doubtless unreliable, are of interest in suggesting the liturgical importance of the period following the return from the exile. This period seems to have produced several psalms. Psalm cxxvi., with its curiously complex feeling, apparently reflects the situation of that period, and the group of psalms which proclaim Jehovah as King, and ring with the notes of a "new song," were probably composed to celebrate the joy of the return and the resumption of public worship in the temple (xciii., xcv.–c., cf. xcvi. 1). The history of the next three centuries is very obscure, and many a psalm which we cannot locate may belong to that period; but the psalms which celebrate the law (i., xix. 7ff., cxix.) no doubt follow the reformation of Ezra in the fifth century.

It is not probable that there are many, if any, psalms later than 170–165 B.C. in the Maccabean period; some deny even this possibility, basing their denial on the history of the canon. But if the book of Daniel, which belongs to this same period, was admitted to the canon, there is no reason why the same honour should not have been conferred

upon some of the psalms. The Maccabean period was fitted, almost more than any other in Israel's history, to rouse the religious passion of the people to song; and, as the possibility must be conceded, the question becomes one of exegesis. Exegetically considered, the claims of at least Psalms xliv., lxxiv., lxxix., lxxxiii. are indubitable. They speak of a desolation of the temple in spite of a punctilious fulfilment of the law, a religious persecution, a slaughter of the saints, a blasphemy of the holy name. No situation fits these circumstances so completely as the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes in 168 B.C., and these psalms betray many remarkable affinities with passages in the first book of the Maccabees. As long ago as the fifth century A.D. the sharp-sighted Theodore of Mopsuestia believed that there were seventeen Maccabean psalms; Calvin admitted at least three. It may be safely concluded, then, that the Psalter brings us within about a century and a half of the Christian era.

The criteria for determining the date of a psalm are few and meagre. The Psalter expresses the piety of more than half a millennium, and even the century cannot always be fixed. The language is often general, and the thoughts uttered would be as possible and appropriate to one century as another. Nearly forty years ago Nöldeke maintained that there were psalms of which we could not say with any definiteness to what period they belonged between 900 and 160 B.C. He himself referred Psalm ii. to Solomon, which had been referred by Hitzig to Alexander Jannaeus (105–78 B.C.). Even where the

historical implications may seem fairly certain, there may be more than one legitimate interpretation. Psalm xlvi., e.g., which is usually regarded as a song of triumph sung after the departure of Sennacherib, is by some interpreted eschatologically; Zion is the ideal Zion of the latter days, and the stream that makes her glad is the stream of Paradise. Some psalms, of course, have their origin stamped very legibly upon them. Psalm cxxxvii. e.g., clearly implies that the exile is not long over. The presence of Aramaisms in a psalm is a fairly sure indication of a relatively late date. Within certain limits, also, its theological ideas may be a guide, though we know too little of the history of these ideas to use this criterion with much confidence. Still, so elaborate an emphasis on the omnipresence of God as we find in Psalm cxxxix. is only possible to a later age, and this inference is more than confirmed by its highly Aramaic flavour. Both these considerations render its ascription to David utterly untenable.

The question was raised long ago and has been much discussed in recent times, whether the subject of the Psalter is the individual or the church; and till very recently the opinion has been gaining ground that the experience and aspiration of the Psalter are not personal and individual, but that in it is heard the collective voice of the church. Many difficulties undoubtedly disappear or are lessened on this interpretation, e.g., the bitterness of the imprecatory psalms, or the far-reaching consequences attached in other psalms (cf. xxii., xl.) to the deliverance of the singer. Till the exile, the religious unit was the

nation, and the collective use of the singular pronoun is one of the commonest phenomena in Hebrew literature. The Decalogue is addressed to Israel in the 2nd pers. sing., in Deuteronomy the 2nd pers. sing. alternates with the pl., in the priestly blessing (Num. vi. 24ff.) Israel is blessed in the singular. In Deutero-Isaiah, the servant of Jehovah is undoubtedly to be interpreted collectively, and in many of the psalms the collective interpretation is put beyond all doubt by the very explicit language of the context :

> Much have they afflicted *me* from my youth up,
> Let *Israel* now say, cxxix. 1.

All this is true, and there are probably more collective psalms in the Psalter than we have been accustomed to believe. But it would be ridiculous to suppose that every psalm has to be so interpreted. Some of the psalms were originally written without any view to the temple service, and they must have expressed the individual emotion of the singer.[1] Besides, Jeremiah had shown or at least suggested that the real unit was the individual ; the teaching of Ezekiel and the book of Job are proof that the lesson had been well learned ; and, although the post-exilic church may have felt its solidarity and realized its corporate consciousness as acutely as the pre-exilic nation, the individual, as a religious unit, could never again be forgotten. He had come to stay ; and if, in many psalms, the general voice of

[1] That Psalms, now collective, were originally individual, and subsequently altered and adapted to the use of the community is seen, e.g., in the occasional disturbance of the order in alphabetical psalms (ix., x.).

the church is heard, it is equally certain that many others utter the emotions and experiences of individual singers.

The Psalter, or part of it, was used in the temple service [1]—witness the numerous musical and liturgical superscriptions (cf. superscr. of Ps. xcii.)—though the people probably did no more than sing or utter the responses (cvi. 48). It would be difficult to estimate the importance of the Psalter to the Old Testament Church. It was the support of piety as well as the expression of it; and, to a worship which laid so much stress upon punctilious ritual and animal sacrifice, the Psalter, with its austere spiritual tone, its simple passion for God, and its bracing sense of fellowship with the Eternal, would come as a wholesome corrective. Almost in the spirit of the older prophets (Hos. vi. 6) animal sacrifice is relegated to an altogether subordinate place (xl., l., li.), if it is not indeed rebuked: the sacrifice dear to God is a broken spirit. Thus the Psalter was a mighty contribution in one direction, as the synagogue in another, to the development of spiritual religion. It kept alive the prophetic element in Israel's religion, and did much to counteract the more blighting influences of Judaism. The place of the law is occasionally recognized (i., xix. 7ff.), once very emphatically (cxix.), but it is honoured chiefly for its moral stimulus. It is not, as in later times, an incubus; it is still an inspiration.

[1] The addition of the last verse to the alphabetic psalms, xxv. and xxxiv., adapts these psalms, whether originally individual or collective, to the temple service.

There are tempers in the Psalter which are anything but lovely—hatred of enemies, protestation of self-righteousness, and other utterances which prevent it from being, in its entirety, the hymn-book of the Christian Church. Historically these things are explicable and perhaps inevitable, but the glory of the Psalter is its overwhelming sense of the reality of God. The men who wrote it counted God their Friend; and although they never forgot that He was the infinite One, whose home is the universe and who fills the vast spaces of history with His faithfulness and His justice, He was also to them the patient and loving One, who preserves both man and beast, under the shadow of whose wings the children of men may rest with quietness and confidence, and before whom they could pour out the deepest thoughts and petitions of their hearts, in the assurance that He was the hearer of prayer, and that His tender mercies were over all His works. He was to them the source of all strength and consolation and vision. In His light they saw light; and in their noblest moments—whatever they might lose or suffer—with Him they were content. In Luther's fine paraphrase of Psalm lxxiii. 25, "If I have but Thee, I ask for nothing in heaven or earth."

Proverbs

MANY specimens of the so-called *Wisdom Literature* are preserved for us in the book of Proverbs, for its contents are by no means confined to what we call proverbs. The first nine chapters constitute a continuous discourse, almost in the manner of a sermon ; and of the last two chapters, ch. xxx. is largely made up of enigmas, and xxxi. is in part a description of the good housewife.

All, however, are rightly subsumed under the idea of wisdom, which to the Hebrew had always moral relations. The Hebrew wise man seldom or never gave himself to abstract speculation ; he dealt with issues raised by practical life. Wise men are spoken of almost as an organized guild, and coordinated with priests and prophets as early as the time of Jeremiah (xviii. 18), but the general impression made by the pre-exilic references to the wise men is that they exercised certain quasi-political functions, and hardly correspond to the wise men of later times who discussed issues of the moral life and devoted themselves to the instruction of young men (Prov. i. 4, 8).

Most of the important types of thought of the wise men are represented in the book of Proverbs. There are proverbs proper, a few of the popular kind,

but most of them bearing the stamp of deliberate art, and dealing with the prudent conduct of life (x.–xxix.); there are speculations of a more general kind on the nature of that wisdom which is the guide of life (i.–ix.); and there is scepticism (cf. Eccles.) represented by the words of Agur (xxx. 1–4). The book, as a whole, might be described as a guide to the happy life, or, we might almost say, to the successful life—for a certain not ignoble utilitarianism clings to many of its precepts. The world is recognized as a moral and orderly world, and wisdom is profitable unto all things. The wisdom which the wise man manifests in contact with life and its exigencies is but a counterpart of the divine wisdom which, in one noble passage, is the fellow of God and more ancient than creation (viii.).

There is not a little literary power in the book. Very beautiful is Wisdom's appeal to the sons of men, and her invitation to the banquet (viii., ix.). The isolated proverbs in x.–xxix. are usually more terse and powerful than they appear in the English translation. There are flashes of humour too:

> As a ring of gold in a swine's snout,
> So is a fair woman without discretion, xi. 22.
> Withhold not correction from thy son,
> Though thou smite him with the rod, he will not die, xxiii. 13.

They deal with life upon its average levels: there is nothing of the prophetic enthusiasm, but they are robust and kindly withal.

Not without reason has the book been called "a forest of proverbs," for at any rate in the body of it it is practically impossible to detect any principle of order. Usually the sayings in x.–xxix. are discon-

nected, but occasionally kindred sayings are gathered into groups of two or more verses ; and sometimes it would seem as if the principle of arrangement was alphabetic, several consecutive verses occasionally beginning with the same letter, e.g., xx. 7–9, xxii. 2–4. There are eight divisions—

(*a*) i.–ix. (of which i. 1–6 is no doubt designed as an introduction to the whole book, and vi. 1–19 is probably an interpolation) : an impressive appeal to secure wisdom and avoid folly, especially when she appears in the guise of the strange woman. Wisdom's own appeal and invitation.

(*b*) x.–xxii. 16. A series of very loosely connected proverbs in couplets, x.–xv. being chiefly antithetic (cf. x. 1, xv. 1) and xvi. 1–xxii. 16 chiefly synthetic (cf. xvi. 16).

(*c*) xxii. 17–xxiv. 22, designated as " the words of the wise," containing a few continuous pieces (cf xxiii. 29–35 on drunkenness) and addressed, like i.–ix., to " my son," cf. xxiii. 15, 26.

(*d*) xxiv. 23–34, probably little more than an appendix to (*c*), and also containing a continuous piece (cf. *vv.* 30–34 on sloth).

(*e*) xxv.–xxix. A series, in many respects resembling (*b*), of loosely connected sayings. This section, especially xxv.–xxvii., contains more proverbs in the strict sense, i.e. sayings without any specific moral bearing, e.g. xxv. 25.

(*f*) xxx. The words of Agur, of a sceptical and enigmatical kind, worked over by an orthodox reader (cf. *vv.* 5, 6, which reprove *vv.* 2–4).

(*g*) xxxi. 1–9. Words addressed to king Lemuel (whom we cannot identify) by his mother.

(*h*) xxxi. 10–31. An alphabetic poem in praise of the good housewife.

Clearly the book makes no pretence to be, as a whole, from Solomon. If we except i. 1–6, which is introductory to the whole book, only (*b*) and (*e*) are assigned to Solomon : the other sections—except the last, are deliberately assigned to others, (*c*) and (*d*) expressly to "the wise." The ascription of the whole book to Solomon, which seems to be implied by its opening verse, and which, if genuine, would render the fresh ascription in x. 1 unnecessary, is no doubt to be explained as the similar ascription of the Psalms to David or the legislation to Moses. He was the "wise man" of Hebrew antiquity, and he is expressly said in 1 Kings iv. 32 to have spoken 3,000 proverbs. The implication of that passage (cf. *v.* 33) is that those proverbs consisted of comparisons between men and trees or animals : that supposition is met by some (cf. vi. 6) but not by many in the book. There are not likely then to be many of his proverbs in our book ; but not impossibly there may be some. Ch. xxv. 1 is indeed very explicit, but that notice is, on the face of it, late. The fact that Hezekiah is called not simply king, but king of Judah, seems to point to a time—at the earliest the exile—when the kingdom of Judah was no more ; so that this notice would be about a century and a half after Hezekiah's time, and Hezekiah is more than two centuries after Solomon. Obviously many of the proverbs in x.–xxix. could not have been Solomon's. The advice as to the proper demeanour in the presence of a king (xxv. 6, 7) would not come very naturally from one who was

himself a king (cf. xxiii.1ff.); nor, to say nothing of the praises of monogamy, would he be likely so to satirize his own government as he would do in xxix. 4: "He whose exactions are excessive ruins the land."

The question may, however, be fairly raised whether the proverbs, though as a whole not Solomonic, may yet be pre-exilic; and here two questions must be kept apart—the date of the individual proverbs and the date of the collections or of the book as a whole. Now it is very probable that some of the proverbs are pre-exilic. The references to the king, e.g.—kindly in x–xxii., and more severe in xxv–xxix.—might indeed apply to the Greek period (fourth and third centuries B.C.), but are equally applicable to the pre-exilic period; and many of the shrewd observations on life might come equally well from any period. But there can be little doubt that the groups in their present form are post-exilic. The sages do their work on the basis of the achievements of law and prophecy.[1] The great prophetic ideas about God are not discussed, they are presupposed; while the "law" of xxviii. 4, 7, 9, as in Psalm cxix., appears to be practically equivalent to Scripture, and would point to the fifth century at the earliest. True, there are sayings quite in the old prophetic spirit, to the effect that character is more acceptable to God than ritual and sacrifice, xxi. 3, 27, xv. 8, xvi. 6; but this would be an equally appropriate and almost more necessary warning in post-exilic times, especially upon the lips of men whose profession was in part that of moral education.

[1] The text of xxix. 18*a* is too insecure (cf. Septuagint) to justify us in saying that prophecy still exists.

There is no challenge of idolatry, such as we should expect if the book were pre-exilic, and monogamy is everywhere presupposed. Indeed it is very remarkable that no mention is made of Israel, or of any institutions distinctly Israelitic. Its subject is not the nation, but the individual, and its wisdom is cosmopolitan. Now though this appeal to man rather than Israel, this emphasis on the universal conscience, can be traced as far back as the eighth century [1] (Amos iii. 9), the thoroughgoing application of it in Proverbs suggests a larger experience of international relationships, which could hardly be placed before the exile, and was not truly developed till long after it, say, in the Persian or Greek period. This is peculiarly true of chs. i.–ix., which was probably an independent piece, prefixed to x.–xxix., to gather up their sporadic elements of wisdom in a comprehensive whole, and to secure an adequate religious basis for their maxims which were, in the main, ethical. It is not necessary to suppose that the personification of wisdom in ch. viii. is directly influenced by Greek philosophy, but the whole speculative manner of the passage points to a late, even if independent, development of Jewish thought. The last two chapters are probably the latest in the book, which, while it must be earlier than Ben Sirach (180 B.C.), who distinctly adapts it, is probably not earlier than 300 B.C.

The value of this much-neglected book is very great. It is easy of course to point to its limitations

[1] Micah vi. 8, "He that showed thee, *O man*, what is good," is also a saying of far-reaching significance in this connection.

—to show that it hardly, if ever (ix. 18 ?) looks out upon another world, but confines its compensations and its penalties to this, xi. 31, or to discover utilitarian elements in its morality, iii. 10, or mechanical features in its conception of life, xvi. 31. But it would be easy to exaggerate. The sages know very well that a good name is better than wealth, xxii. 1, and that the deepest success of life is its conformity to the divine wisdom (i.–ix.). While most of the maxims are purely ethical, it has to be remembered that to the Hebrew morality rests upon religion : the introductory section (i.–ix.) throws its influence across the whole book, the motto of which is that the fear of Jehovah is the basis of knowledge and its chief constituent, i. 7. Besides, many of the maxims themselves are specifically religious, e.g., "He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker," xiv. 31, "He that hath pity on the poor lendeth to Jehovah," xix. 17. On the more purely moral side, besides giving a welcome glimpse into ancient Hebrew society, it is rich in applications to modern life. Slander and revenge are severely denounced ; and earnest and repeated warnings are lifted up in different parts of the book against wine and women (v., xxiii., xxxi.). Care for animals is inculcated, xii. 10, and love to enemies, xxv. 21., in words borrowed by the New Testament—a notable advance on Leviticus xix. 18.

In one or two respects the book is of peculiar interest and value to the modern world. It is more interested, e.g., in practice than in creed. Its creed is very simple, little more than a general fear of Jehovah ; but this receives endless application to

practical life. Again, the appeal of the book is, on the whole, not to revelation, but to experience, and it meets the average man and woman upon their ordinary level. Its appeal is therefore one which cannot be evaded, as it commends itself, without the support of revelation, to the universal moral instincts of mankind. Again, its emphasis upon the moral, as opposed to the speculative, is striking. Immediately after a passage which approaches as near to metaphysical speculation as any Old Testament writer ever approaches, viii. 22–31, comes a direct, tender and personal appeal. Lastly, there is an almost modern sense of the inexorableness of law in the solemn reminder that those who refuse and despise the call of wisdom will be left alone and helpless when their day of trouble comes, i. 22ff. But the sternness is mitigated by a gentler thought. Like a gracious lady, wisdom, which is only one aspect of the divine Providence, pleads with men, yearning to win them from their folly to the peace and happiness which are alone with her ; and even suffering is but one of the ways of God, a confirmation of sonship, and even a manifestation of His love.

> Whom Jehovah loveth, He reproveth,
> Even as a father the son in whom he delighteth, iii. 12

This is perhaps the profoundest note in the book of Proverbs. A book so rich in moral precept and religious thought may well claim to have fulfilled its programme : " to give prudence to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion," i. 4.

Job

THE book of Job is one of the great masterpieces of the world's literature, if not indeed the greatest. The author was a man of superb literary genius, and of rich, daring, and original mind. The problem with which he deals is one of inexhaustible interest, and his treatment of it is everywhere characterized by a psychological insight, an intellectual courage, and a fertility and brilliance of resource which are nothing less than astonishing. Opinion has been divided as to how the book should be classified, whether as epic, dramatic or didactic poetry. It is didactic at any rate in the sense that the poet, who wrote it with his heart's blood, intended to read his generation a much-needed lesson on the mysterious discipline of life ; and it is dramatic, though not in the ordinary sense—for in the poetry proper there is no development of action—yet in the sense that it vividly pourtrays the conflict of minds, and the clash of conventional with independent opinion.

The story of the book is easily told. The prologue (i., ii.) introduces Job as a pattern of scrupulous piety, and therefore, in accordance with the ancient view, a prosperous man. In the heavenly council, the Satan insinuates that, if the prosperity be withdrawn, the piety will also disappear. Jehovah,

sure of His servant Job, grants the Satan permission to deprive Job of all that he *has*, in order that he may discover what he *is*. Job sustains the four fierce blows, which stripped him of all, with beautiful resignation. The Satan is foiled. He now insinuates that the trial has not been severe enough : only his property has been touched—not his person. With Jehovah's permission a second assault is made, and Job is smitten with the incurable and loathsome disease of leprosy, so that he is without hope in the world. He has nothing but God—will God be enough ? Again Job sustains his trial in noble and ever-memorable words ; and the Satan is foiled again. Then three of Job's friends—great sheikhs —come to express their sorrow.

Then follow three cycles of speeches between Job and his friends (iii.–xiv. ; xv.–xxi. ; xxii.–xxxi).

First cycle. Job begins by lamenting his birthday and longing for death (iii.). Eliphaz, a man of age and wisdom, with much courtesy and by an appeal to a revelation which had been given him in the night, seeks to reconcile Job to his lot, reminding him that no mortal man can be pure in the sight of God, and assuring him of restoration, if he accepts his suffering as discipline (iv., v.). Job rejects this easy optimism and expresses his longing for a speedy death, as life on the earth is nothing but a miserable warfare (vi., vii.). Bildad, annoyed at Job's challenge of God's justice, asserts the sure destruction of evil-doers, but implicitly concedes, at the end, that Job is not an evil-doer, by promising him a bright future (viii.). Job then grows ironical. Of course, he says, God is always in the right. Might is right, and

He is almighty, destroying innocent and guilty alike. He longs to meet God, and to know why He so marvellously treats the creature He so marvellously made (ix., x.). Zophar bluntly condemns Job's bold words and urges repentance, but, like his friends, foretells the dawn of a better day for Job, though his very last words are ominous and suggestive of another possibility (xi.). Job, with a sarcastic compliment to the wisdom of his friends, claims the right to an independent judgment and challenges the whole moral order of the world. Better be honest—God needs no man to distort the facts for Him. Job longs for a meeting, in which God will either speak to him or listen to him. But, as no answer comes, he laments again the pathos of life, which ends so utterly in death (xii.–xiv.).

Second cycle. Eliphaz, concluding that Job despises religion, describes in vigorous terms the fate of the godless (xv.). Job complains of his fierce persecution by God, and appeals, in almost the same breath, against this unintelligible God to the righteous God in heaven, who is his witness and sponsor; but again he falls back into gloom and despondency (xvi., xvii.). Bildad answers by describing the doom of the wicked, with more than one unmistakable allusion to Job's case (xviii.). Job is vexed. He breaks out into a lament of his utter desolation, the darkness of which, however, is shot through with a sudden and momentary gleam of assurance that God will one day vindicate him (xix.). Not so, answers Zophar: the triumph of the wicked is short (xx.). Job, in a bold and terrible speech, assails the doctrine of the friends, challenges the moral order,

and asserts that the world is turned upside down (xxi.).

Third cycle. To the friends Job now seems to be condemned out of his own mouth, and Eliphaz coolly proceeds to accuse him of specific sins (xxii.). This drives Job to despair, and he longs to appear before the God whom he cannot find, to plead his cause before Him. Why does He not interpose ? and again follows a fierce challenge of the moral order (xxiii., xxiv.). The arguments of the friends are being gradually exhausted, and Bildad can only reply by asserting the uncleanness of man in presence of the infinite majesty of God (xxv., xxvi.). In spite of this Job asserts his integrity, xxvii. 1–6. Zophar repeats the old doctrine of the doom of the wicked, xxvii. 7–23. Then Job rises up, like a giant, to make his last great defence. He pictures his former prosperity and his present misery, and ends, in a chapter which touches the noblest heights of Old Testament morality, with a detailed assertion of the principles that governed his conduct and character. With one great cry that the Almighty would listen to him, he concludes (xxix.–xxxi.).

The Almighty does listen ; and He answers—not by referring to Job's particular case, still less to his sin, but by questions that suggest to Job His own power, wisdom, and love, and the ignorance and impotence of man, xxxviii., xxxix., xl. 2, 8–14. Job humbly recognizes the inadequacy of his criticism in the light of this vision of God, xl. 3–5, xlii. 2–6, and with this the poem comes to an end.

The epilogue, xlii. 7–17, in prose, describes how Jehovah severely condemned the friends for the

words they had spoken, commended His servant Job for speaking rightly of Him, and restored him to double his former prosperity

It is obvious that we have here a religious and not a philosophical discussion. Indeed it is hardly a discussion at all; for, though the psychological interest of the situation is heightened by every speech, there is practically no development in the argument. The friends grow more excited and unfair, Job grows more calm and dignified; but so far as argument is concerned, neither he nor they affect each other—the author meaning to suggest by this perhaps the futility of human discussion.

The problem of the book of Job has been variously defined. In one form it is raised by the question of Satan, i. 9, "Doth Job fear God for naught?" which is the Hebrew way of saying, "Is there such a thing as disinterested religion?" But the body of the book discusses the problem under a wider aspect: how can the facts of human life, and especially the sufferings of the righteous, be reconciled with the justice of God? With delicate skill the author has suggested that this problem is a universal one; not Israel alone is perplexed by it, but humanity. To indicate this, he puts his hero and his stage outside the land of Israel. Job is a foreign saint, and Uz is on the borders of the Arabian desert.

The ancient theory of retribution was very simple: every man received what he deserved—the good prosperity, the bad misfortune. In its national application, this principle was obviously more or less true, but every age must have seen numerous excep-

tions in the life of the individual. The exceptions, however, were not felt to be particularly perplexing, because, till the exile, the individual was hardly seriously felt to be a religious unit : his personality was merged in the wider life of the tribe or nation. But the exile, which saw many of the best men suffer, forced the question to the front ; and the explanation then commonly offered was that they were suffering for the sins of the fathers. Ezekiel denied this and maintained that the individual received exactly what he deserved (xviii.) : it is well with the righteous and ill with the wicked. The friends of Job in the main represent this doctrine, Eliphaz appealing to revelation, Bildad to tradition, and Zophar to common sense. The author of the book of Job desires, among other things, to expose the inadequacy of this doctrine. Job, a good man—not only on his own confession (xxxi.), but on the express and repeated admission of God Himself, i. 8, ii. 3—is overwhelmed with calamities which cannot be explained by the imperfections which are inherent in all men, and which Job himself readily admits vii. 21. How are such sufferings to be reconciled with the justice of God ?

The problem had to be solved without reference to the future world. To a steady faith in immortality, which can find its compensations otherwhere, there is no real problem ; but it is certain that, though there are scattered hints, xiv. 13, xix. 25ff.—which, however, many interpret differently—of a life after death, this belief is not held by Job (or by the author) tenaciously, nor offered as a solution, for the lamentations continue to the end. The solution,

if there is any, the author must find in this world. It would seem that no definite solution is offered, though there are not a few profound and valuable suggestions.

(1) The prologue, e.g., suggests that the sufferings of earth find their ultimate explanation in the councils of heaven. What is done or suffered here is determined there. (2) Again the prologue suggests that suffering is a test of fidelity. Job has proved his essential and disinterested goodness, besides glorifying the name of the God, who trusted him, by standing fast. (3) The friends make their shallow and conventional contribution to the solution : from the doctrine—whose strict and universal truth Job denied—that sin was always followed by suffering, they inferred the still more questionable doctrine that suffering was punishment for sin. In estimating the views of the friends, it should never be forgotten that Jehovah, in the epilogue, condemns them as not having spoken the thing that is right, xlii. 7, 8. Of course, though inadequate, they are not always absolutely wrong ; and Eliphaz expresses a truth not wholly inapplicable to Job's case—at least to the Job of the speeches—when he insists on the disciplinary value of suffering, v. 17 ff.

(4) If a real solution is offered anywhere, one would most naturally look for it in the speeches of Jehovah (xxxviii. ff.) ; and at first sight they are not very promising. Their effect would most naturally be rather to silence and overwhelm Job than to convince him ; and to some they have suggested no more than that the contemplation of nature may be a remedy for scepticism. But their object is profounder

than that. By heightening the sense of the mystery of the universe, they show Job the folly, and almost the impertinence, of expecting an adequate answer to all his whys and wherefores. A man who cannot account for the most familiar facts of the physical world is not likely to explore the subtler mysteries of the moral world. But there is more. The divine speeches suggest that God is not only strong—Job knew that very well (ix.)—but wise, xxxviii. 2, and kind, feeding even the ravenous beasts, xxxviii. 39, and tenderly caring for the waste and desolate place where no man is, xxxviii. 26. The universe compels trust in the wisdom and love of God. (5) The epilogue, too, shows how the suffering hero was rewarded and vindicated. The reward we shall discuss afterwards ; but it is with fine instinct that the epilogue represents Job as a man so powerful with God that his prayer is effectual to save his erring friends, and four times within two verses, xlii. 7 f, Jehovah calls him " My servant Job." Therein lies his real vindication, rather than in the reward of the sheep and the oxen.

The book clearly intends to suggest that in this world it is vain to look for exact retribution. From calamity it is unjust to infer special or secret sin : the worst may happen to the best. Again, there is such a thing as disinterested goodness, a goodness which believes in and clings to God, when it has nothing to hope for but Himself. But the book may also be fairly regarded as a protest against contemporary theology ; and, in its present form, at any rate, it suggests that God loves the independent thinker. The friends are orthodox, but shallow :

" Who ever perished, being innocent ? " iv. 7. They are so wedded to their theories that even the oldest and wisest among them cruelly invents falsehoods to support them (xxii.). Job replies to theories by facts. He is a man of independent observation and judgment, his mouth must " taste for itself," xii. 11. He is bold sometimes almost to blasphemy, he accuses God of destroying innocent and guilty alike, ix. 22, and does not scruple to parody a psalm, vii. 17 f. Yet he does this because he must be true to facts, whatever comes of theories : he must cling to the God of conscience against the God of convention.

In discussing the scheme of the book and the solution it offers of the problem of suffering, we have not yet taken into account the *speeches of Elihu* (xxxii.–xxxvii.). The value and importance of these have been variously estimated, the extremes being represented by Duhm, who characterizes them as the childish effusions of some bombastic rabbi, and Cornill, who calls them " the crown of the book of Job." It is not without good reason that the authenticity of this section has been doubted. After the dramatic appeal at the close of Job's splendid defence, it is natural to suppose that Jehovah appears ; and when He does appear (xxxviii.), His speech is expressly said to be an answer to Job. Elihu is completely ignored, as he is not only in the prologue but also in the epilogue, xlii. 7. The latter omission would be especially strange, if he is integral to the book. As his speech is not condemned, it is natural to infer from the silence that it is implicitly commended. In that case, however, we have two solu-

tions—the Elihu speeches and the Jehovah speeches. But there is practically nothing new in the Elihu speeches : in emphasizing the greatness of God, they but anticipate the Jehovah speeches, and in emphasizing the disciplinary value of chastisement, they but amplify the point already made by Eliphaz in v. 17ff., and most summarily expressed in xxxvi. 15. Almost the only other assertion made is that, as against Job's contention, God does speak to men—through dreams, sickness, angels, etc. The lengthy description in which Elihu is introduced, and the mention of his genealogy, are very unlike the other introductions. The literary art of the section is, speaking generally, inferior to that of the rest of the book. It is imitative rather than creative. Elihu takes about twenty verses to announce the simple fact that he is going to speak, though there might be a dramatic propriety in this, as he is represented as a young man. Further, the language is more Aramaic than the rest of the book. Cornill, however, defends the section as offering the real solution of the problem. " If a man recognizes the educative character of suffering and takes it to heart, the suffering becomes for him a source of infinite blessing, the highest manifestation of divine love." But it seems rather improbable that the true solution should be put into the lips of a young man, who said he was ready to burst if he did not deliver himself of his speech, xxxii. 19. Apart from the fact that it is more natural to look for the solution in the speeches of Jehovah, and that the Elihu speeches, in condemning Job, disagree with the epilogue, which commends him, the arguments against their authenticity seem

much more than to counterbalance the little that can be said in their favour; and in all probability they are an orthodox addition to the book from the pen of some later scholar who was offended by Job's accusations of God and protestations of his own innocence.

The authenticity of the *prologue and epilogue* has also been questioned, some scholars asserting that they really form the beginning and end of an older (pre-exilic) book of Job, the body of which was replaced by the speeches in our present book. The question is far from unimportant, as on it depends, in part, our conception of the purpose of the author of the speeches. Against the idea that the prologue and epilogue are from his hand are these considerations. They are in prose, while the body of the book is in verse. Again, the name of God in the prologue and epilogue is Jehovah; elsewhere, with one exception, which is probably an interpolation, xii. 9, it is El, Eloah, Shaddai, as if Jehovah were purposely avoided.[1] In xix. 17*b*, where the true translation is "Mine evil savour is strange to the sons of my body," the children are regarded as living:[2] while in the prologue they are dead. But more serious is the fact that the Job of the prologue seems to differ fundamentally from the Job of the speeches. The former is patient, submissive, resigned; the latter is impatient, bitter, and even defiant. Further, the epilogue represents Jehovah

[1] Ch. xxxviii. 1, being introductory to the speeches of Jehovah, should hardly be counted.

[2] See, however, viii. 4, xxix. 5, so that xix. 17*b* may be due to forgetfulness.

as commending Job and condemning the friends without qualification, whereas it may be urged that, in the course of the speeches, the friends were not always wrong, nor was Job always right, and that it is impossible that his merciless criticisms of the moral order could have passed without divine rebuke: much that Job said would have delighted the Satan of the prologue. These considerations have led to the supposition that, in the original book, Job maintained throughout the spirit of devout resignation which he showed in the prologue, while it was the friends who accused God of cruelty and injustice. A bolder and profounder thinker of a later age attacked the problem independently on the basis of the old story, and inserted his contribution, iii.–xlii. 6, between the prologue and the epilogue, thus giving a totally different turn to the story.

This view is ingenious, but does not seem necessary. Psychologically, there is no necessary incompatibility between the Job of the prologue and the Job of the speeches. It must not be forgotten that months have elapsed between the original blow and the lamentations, vii. 3—months in which the brooding mind of the sufferer has had time to pass from resignation to perplexity, and almost to despair. Again, the words of Job are not to be taken too seriously; they are, as he says himself, the words of a desperate man, vi. 26, and the commendation in the epilogue may be taken to apply rather to his general attitude than to his particular utterances. Some kind of introduction there must undoubtedly have been; otherwise the speeches, and especially Job's repeated asseverations of his inno-

cence, are unintelligible. The literary power and skill of the prologue is as great as that of the speeches: dramatically, the swift contrast between the happy family upon the earth and the council of gods in heaven, or the rapid succession of blows that rained upon Job the moment that Satan "went forth from the presence of Jehovah," is as effective as the psychological surprises in which the book abounds. The language is slightly in favour of a post-exilic date, and the conception of Satan appears to be somewhat in advance of Zechariah iii. 1 (520 B.C.). On the whole it seems fair to conclude that the great poet who composed the speeches also wrote the prologue, though of course his material lay to hand in a popular, and not improbably written story.

With the prologue must go at least part of the epilogue, xlii. 7–9; for the author's purpose is to characterize the two types of thought represented by the discussion and to vindicate Job. More doubt may attach to the concluding section, *vv.* 10–17, which represents that vindication as taking the form of a material reward. A Western reader is surprised and disappointed: to him it seems that the author has "fallen from his high estate," and has failed to be convinced by his own magnificent argument. But, as we have already said, the real vindication of Job is the efficacy of his prayer, and the material reward is, in any case, not much more than a sort of poetic justice. It is indeed an outward and visible sign of the relation subsisting between Job and his God; but it is hard to believe that the genius who fought his way to such a solution as appears in xxxviii., xxxix., would himself have laid

much stress upon it. Yet it is not inappropriate or irrelevant. Job's sufferings had their origin in Satan's denial of his integrity ; and now that Satan has been convinced—for Job clings in the deepest darkness to the God of his conscience—it is only just that he should be restored to his former state.

It is not certain that ch. xxviii. with its fine description of wisdom, which is neither to be found in mine nor mart, is original to the book. It does not connect well either with the preceding or the following chapter. The serenity that breathes through ch. xxviii. would not naturally be followed by the renewed lamentations of xxix., and it would further be dramatically inappropriate for a man in agony to speak thus didactically. It is a sort of companion piece to Proverbs viii. ; it is too abstract for its context, and lacks its almost fierce emotion.

Doubt also attaches to the sections descriptive of *the hippopotamus and the crocodile*, xl. 15–xli. The defence is that, as the earlier speeches of God, xxxviii. xxxix., were to convince Job of his ignorance, so these are to convince him of his impotence. But the descriptions, though fine in their way (cf. xli. 22), do not stand on the same literary level as those of xxxviii., xxxix. These are brief and drawn to the life—how vivid are the pictures of the war-horse and the wild ass !—those of xl., xli. are diffuse and somewhat exaggerated. Of course Oriental standards of taste are not ours ; still the difference can hardly be ignored. It is worthy of note, too, that the word leviathan in xli. 1 is used in a totally different sense from iii. 8, where it is the mythological (sea ?) dragon. The author appears to have

travelled widely and the book betrays a knowledge of Egypt (cf. pyramids, iii. 14 ; papyrus, viii. 11 ; reed ships, ix. 26 ; phoenix, xxix. 18), but it is not without significance that all his other animal pictures are drawn from the desert—the lion (iv.), the wild ass, the war-horse. On the whole, it is hardly probable that these long descriptions, rather unnecessarily retarding, as they do, the crisis between Jehovah and Job for which the sympathetic reader is impatiently waiting, are original to the book.

Certain redistributions of the speeches seem to be necessary. Ch. xxvi. is conceived in a temper thoroughly unlike that of Job at this stage, while it closely resembles that of xxv. As ch. xxv. would be an unusually short speech, it is probable that xxv. and xxvi. should both be given to Bildad. That there is something wrong is plain from the fresh introduction to xxvii. 1 (cf. xxix. 1), a phenomenon which does not elsewhere occur and which, if xxvi. is Job's, should be unnecessary. Again in xxvii. 7–23 Job turns completely round upon his own position and adopts that of the friends. It has been said that he " forgets himself sufficiently in ch. xxvii. to deliver a discourse which would have been suitable in the mouth of one of the friends." Surely such an explanation is as impossible as it is psychologically unnatural : in all probability *vv.* 7–23 ought to be given to Zophar—the more probably as xxvii. 13 is very like xx. 19, which is Zophar's. This would have the further advantage of accounting for the fresh introduction to xxix. (especially if we allow xxviii. to be a later addition).

Probably xxxi. 38–40, which constitute, at least

to an Occidental taste, an anticlimax in their present position, should be placed after *v.* 32, and xl. 3–5 (followed by xlii. 2–6) after xl. 6–14.

The date of the book of Job is not easy to determine. Ch. xii. 17 shows a knowledge of the dethronement of kings and the exile of priests and nobles which compels a date at any rate later than the fall of the northern kingdom (721 B.C.) more probably also of the southern. The reference in Ezekiel, xiv. 14, 20, to Job should not be pressed, as it involves only a knowledge of the man, not necessarily of any book, still less of our book. Nor can much be made of the parody of Psalm viii. 4 in Job vii. 17, as we have no means of fixing precisely the date of the psalm. Job's lament and curse in ch. iii. are strikingly similar to Jeremiah xx. 14–18, and there can be little doubt that the priority lies on the side of the prophet. Jeremiah was in no mood for quotation, his words are brief and abrupt. The book of Job is a highly artistic poem, and it is much more probable that Job iii. is an elaboration of the passionate words of Jeremiah than that Jeremiah adapted in his sorrow the longer lament of Job. This circumstance would bring us down to a time, at the earliest, very near the exile.

At this point it has to be noted that the discussion of the moral problem in the book of Job is in advance of Jeremiah or Ezekiel. Against the explanation that the children's teeth are set on edge because their fathers have eaten sour grapes, Ezekiel has nothing to offer but a rather mechanical doctrine of strict retribution (ch. xviii.). The book of Job re-

presents a further stage, when that doctrine was seen to be untenable; and the whole question is again boldly raised and still more boldly discussed. This would carry the date below Ezekiel. As the problem in Job is individual, and only indirectly, if at all, a national one—"there was *a man* in the land of Uz"—the book cannot be earlier than the exile.

But further, there is an unmistakable similarity between the temper of this book and that of the pious in the time of Malachi. "Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of Jehovah, and He delighteth in them. Where is the God of justice?" Malachi ii. 17. We might fancy we heard the voice of Job; and almost more plainly in Malachi iii. 14, "It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance?" Equally striking is the similarity between the dialectic temper in Job and Malachi. Everywhere in Malachi occur the phrases, "Ye have said, yet ye say," etc. Good men have not only raised the problem of the moral order, as Habakkuk and Jeremiah had done: they are formally discussing it—exactly the phenomenon which we have in Job and do not have in pre-exilic times. If it be asked why, in that case, there is no trace of influence of Deutero-Isaiah's solution, the answer is that, in any case, that solution stands without serious influence on the subsequent development of religious thought in the Old Testament.

Again, the peculiar boldness of the discussion suggests a post-exilic date. Jeremiah is also very bold, xii. 1, but it is a different type of audacity that expresses itself in the book of Job. Unlike Ecclesiastes in practically everything else, Job is like it in

being a sustained and fearless challenge of the phenomena of the moral world. A post-exilic date, and perhaps not a very early one, would seem to be suggested by these phenomena. It is the product not only of an unhappy man, but of an unhappy time, when life is a warfare, vii. 1, and good men are bitter in heart. This date is borne out by the angelology of the book, v. 1, and by its easy use of mythology, iii. 8, xxvi. 5—a mythology which is felt to be completely innocuous, because monotheism is secure beyond the possibility of challenge. It is practically certain that the book falls before Chronicles (*circa* 300 B.C.) as in 1 Chronicles xxi. 1, Satan is a proper name, whereas in Job the word is still an appellative—he is "the Satan." Where the evidence is so slender certainty is impossible; but there is a probability that the book may be safely placed somewhere between 450 and 350 B.C. One could conceive it to be, in one sense, a protest against the legalistic conception of religion encouraged by the work of Ezra, and this would admirably fit the date assigned.

Song of Songs

THE contents of this book justify the description of it in the title, i. 1, as the " loveliest song "—for that is the meaning of the Hebrew idiom " song of songs." It abounds in poetical gems of the purest ray. It breathes the bracing air of the hill country, and the passionate love of man for woman and woman for man. It is a revelation of the keen Hebrew delight in nature, in her vineyards and pastures, flowers and fruit trees, in her doves and deer and sheep and goats. It is a song tremulous from beginning to end with the passion of love ; and this love it depicts in terms never coarse, but often frankly sensuous—so frankly sensuous that in the first century its place in the canon was earnestly contested by Jewish scholars. That place was practically settled in 90 A.D. by the Synod of Jamnia, which settled other similar questions ; and about 120 A.D. we find a distinguished rabbi maintaining that " the whole world does not outweigh the day when the Song of Songs was given to Israel ; while all the *Writings* are holy, the song is holiest of all." This extravagant language suggests that the canonicity of the song had been strenuously contested ; and it may have been a latent sense of the secular origin of the song that led to the prescription that a Jew must not read it till

he was thirty years of age. Its place in the canon was no doubt secured for it by two considerations, (i) its reputed Solomonic authorship, (ii) its allegorical interpretation.

The reception of the book in the Canon led, as Siegfried has said, to the most monstrous creations in the history of interpretation. If it be by Solomon, and therefore a holy book, it must be a celebration of divine love, not of human. So it was argued; and the theme of the book was regarded as the love of Jehovah for Israel. Christian interpreters, following this hint of their Jewish predecessors, applied it to the love of Christ for His church or for the individual soul. The allegorical view of the poem has many parallels in the mystic poetry of the East, and it even finds a slender support in Hosea's comparison of the relation of Jehovah to Israel as a marriage relationship; but taking into account the general nature of the poem, and the tendencies of the Hebrew mind, it may be fairly said that the allegorical interpretation is altogether impossible. Any love poem would be equally capable of such an interpretation.

Another view, first hinted at in a phrase of Origen, is that the book is a drama, a view which has held the field—not without challenge—for over a century. There is much in the language of the song to suggest this: it is obvious, e.g., that there is occasional dialogue, i. 15, 16, ii. 2, 3, but the actual story of the drama was very far from clear. The older view was that it was a story of Solomon's love for a peasant girl, and of his redemption from his impure loves by his affection for her. But as in viii. 11 f. and

elsewhere, Solomon is spoken of by way of contrast, room must be made for a third person, the shepherd lover of the peasant maid ; and, with much variety of detail, the supporters of the dramatic theory now adhere in general to the view that the poem celebrates the fidelity of a peasant maid who had been captured and brought to Solomon's harem, but who steadily resisted his blandishments and was finally restored to her shepherd lover. The book becomes thus not a triumph of love over lust, but of love over temptation. The story is very pretty ; but the objections to it and to the dramatic view of the book are all but insuperable. It must be confessed that, to arrive at such a story at all, a good deal has to be read between the lines, and interpreters usually find what they bring ; but the most fatal objection to it is that the text in vi. 12, on which the whole story turns—the maiden's surprise in the orchard by the retinue of the king—is so disjointed and obscure that the attempt to translate it has been abandoned by many competent scholars.

Apart from that, the story can hardly be said to be probable. "She, my dove, is but one," vi. 9, would sound almost comical upon the lips of one who possessed the harem of vi. 8. But in any case, it is almost inconceivable that Solomon would have taken a refusal from a peasant girl : Oriental kings were not so scrupulous. Again, it is very hard to detect any progress on the dramatic view of the book. Ch. viii. with its innocent expression of an early love, follows ch. vii., which is sensuous to the last degree. Further, in the absence of stage directions, every commentator divides the verses among

the characters in a way of his own: the opening words of the song, i. *2a*, may be interpreted in three or four different ways, and equal possibilities of interpretation abound throughout the song. Of course the difficulties are not quite so great in the Hebrew as in the English (e.g. i. 15 must be spoken by the bridegroom and i. 16 by the bride), but they are great enough. Again, how are we to conceive of so short a play—116 lines—being divided into acts and scenes? for the scenes are continually changing, and the longest would not last more than two minutes. It would not be fair to lay too much stress upon the fact that there is no other illustration of a purely Semitic drama; that would be to argue that, if a thing did not happen twice, it did not happen once. Nevertheless, coupled with the untold difficulties and confusions that arise from regarding the song as a drama, the absence of a Semitic parallel is significant.

The true view of this perplexing book appears to be that it is, as Herder called it, "a string of pearls" —an anthology of love or wedding songs sung during the festivities of the "king's week," as the first week after the wedding is called in Syria. Very great probability has been added to this view by the observations of Syrian customs made by Wetzstein in his famous essay on "The Syrian Threshing-board," and first thoroughly applied by Budde to the interpretation of the Song. Syrian weddings, we are told, usually took place in March, ii. 11 ff. The threshing-floor is set on a sort of platform on the threshing-board covered with carpets and pillows; and upon this throne, the "king and queen," i.e. the bride

and bridegreoom, are seated, while the guests honour them with song, game and dance. This lasts for seven days (cf. Gen. xxix. 27; Jud. xiv. 12); and the theory is that in the Song of Songs we have specimens of the songs sung on such an occasion. In particular, it is practically certain that vi. 13–vii. 9 is the song which accompanied the "sword-dance" (as the last words of vi. 13 should probably be translated) performed by the bride on the eve of her wedding day. This would explain the looseness of the arrangement, no special attempt being made to unify the songs, though it may be conceded that the noble eulogy of love in viii. 6, 7, as it is the finest utterance in the book, was probably intended as a sort of climax.

The king, then, is not Solomon, but the peasant bridegroom, who enjoys the regal dignity, and even the name of Israel's most splendid monarch, iii. 7, 9, for the space of a week. Ch. iii. 11, with its reference to the bridegroom's crown (cf. Isa. lxi. 10), is all but conclusive proof that the hero is not king Solomon, but another sort of bridegroom. His bride, perhaps a plain country girl, counts for the week as the maid of Shulem, vi. 13, i.e. Abishag, once the fairest maid in Israel (vi. 1, 1 Kings i. 3). So throughout the "king's week" everything is transfigured and takes on the colours of royal magnificence: the threshing-board becomes a palanquin, and the rustic bodyguard appear as a band of valiant warriors, iii. 7, 8. There is a charming naïveté, and indeed something much profounder, in this temporary transformation of those humble rustic lives. We are involuntarily reminded of scenes in

A Midsummer Night's Dream. This view of the book has commended itself to scholars like Nöldeke, who formerly championed the dramatic theory, though two of the latest writers [1] have argued skilfully against it.

The following may be taken as an approximate division of the songs, though some of the longer sections might easily be regarded as a combination of two or three songs. The bride praises the bridegroom, modestly depreciates her own beauty, and asks where her bridegroom is to be found, i. 2–8. Each sings the other's praises : the happiness of the bride, i. 9–ii. 7. A spring wooing, ii. 8–17. The bride's dream, iii. 1–5. The bridegroom's procession, iii. 6–11. The charms of the bride, iv. 1–v. 1. The beauty of the bridegroom, v. 2–vi. 3. Praise of the bride, vi. 4–12. Praise of the bride as she dances the sword-dance, vii. 1–10. The bride's longing, vii. 11–viii. 4. The incomparable power of love, viii. 5–7. The bride's proud reply to her brothers, viii. 8–10. The two vineyards, viii. 11, 12. Conclusion, viii. 13, 14.

The immortal verses in praise of love, viii. 6, 7, show that, in spite of its often sensuous expression, the love here celebrated is not only pure but exclusive ; and the book, which once was regarded as a satire on the court of Solomon, would in any case make in favour of monogamic sentiment, and tend to ennoble ideals in a country where marriage was simply regarded as a contract.

The mention of Israel's ancient capital Tirzah in

[1] Harper, in the Cambridge Bible "Song of Songs," and Rothstein, in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*.

vi. 4 (if the text be correct) as a parallel to Jerusalem, would alone be enough to bring the date below Solomon's time (cf. 1 Kings xiv. 17, xvi. 23). But it is no doubt much later. The Persian word *pardes* in iv. 13 appears to imply the Persian period, and is used elsewhere only in post-exilic books (Neh. ii. 8 ; Eccles. ii. 5). Indeed the word *appirion* in iii. 9 appears to be the Hebraized form of a Greek word *phoreion*, and if so would almost necessarily imply the Greek period, though the Hebrews may have been acquainted with Greek words, through the Greek settlements in Egypt, as early as the sixth century B.C. Many of the words and constructions, however, are demonstrably late and Aramaic ; and the linguistic evidence alone (unless we assume an earlier book to have been worked over in later times) would put the Song hardly earlier than the fourth century B.C. Yet the fact that though a secular writing, it is in Hebrew and not Aramaic, which was rapidly gaining ground, shows that it can hardly be brought down much later. On the whole, probably it is to be placed somewhere between 400 and 300 ; and its sunny vivacity thus becomes a welcome foil to the austerity of the post-exilic age. If this argument is sound, it follows that the book cannot have been by Solomon. The superscription, i. 1, was no doubt added by a later hand on the basis of the many references to Solomon in the book, iii. 7–11, viii. 11 f, and of the statement in 1 Kings iv. 32 that he was the author of 1,005 songs.

Where the songs were composed we cannot tell. The scenes they reflect so vividly are rather those of Israel than of Judah, but the repeated allusions to

the daughters of Jerusalem would be most naturally explained if the songs came from Jerusalem or its neighbourhood. With this agree the references to Engedi, Heshbon, Kedar, while the northern places mentioned, Lebanon, Hermon, Gilead, Damascus, are such as would be familiar, at any rate, by reputation, to a Judean.

Ruth

GOETHE has characterized the book of Ruth as the loveliest little idyll that tradition has transmitted to us. Whatever be its didactic purpose—and some would prefer to think that it had little or none—it is, at any rate, a wonderful prose poem, sweet, artless, and persuasive, touched with the quaintness of an older world and fresh with the scent of the harvest fields. The love—stronger than country—of Ruth for Naomi, the gracious figure of Boaz as he moves about the fields with a word of blessing for the reapers, the innocent scheming of Naomi to secure him as a husband for Ruth—these and a score of similar touches establish the book for ever in the heart of all who love nobility and romance.

The inimitable grace and tenderness of the story are dissipated in a summary, but the main facts are these. A man of Bethlehem, with his wife Naomi and two sons, is driven by stress of famine to Moab, where the sons marry women of the land. In course of time, father and sons die, and Naomi resolves to return home. Ruth, one of her daughters-in-law, accompanies her, in spite of Naomi's earnest entreaty that she should remain in her own land. In Bethlehem, Ruth receives peculiar kindness from Boaz, a wealthy landowner, who happens to be a kinsman of Naomi; and Naomi, with a woman's

happy instinct, devises a plan for bringing Boaz to declare himself a champion and lover of Ruth. The plan is successful. A kinsman nearer than Boaz refuses to claim his rights by marrying her, and the way is left open for Boaz. He accordingly marries Ruth, who thus becomes the ancestress of the great King David.

Why was this story told? The question of its object is to some extent bound up with the question of date; and for several reasons, this appears to be late. (1) In the Greek, Latin and modern Bibles, Ruth is placed after Judges; in the Hebrew Bible it is placed towards the end, among the *Writings*, i.e. the last division, in which, speaking generally, only late books appear. Had the book been pre-exilic, it is natural to suppose that it would have been placed after Judges in the second division. Some indeed maintain that this is its original position; but it is easier to account for its transference from the third division to the second, as a foil to the war-like episodes of the judges, than for its transference from the second to the third. (2) The argument from language is perhaps not absolutely decisive, but, on the whole, it is scarcely compatible with an early date. Some words are pure Aramaic, and some of the Hebrew usages do not appear in early literature, e.g., "fall," in the sense of "fall out, issue, happen," iii. 18. (3) The opening words —"In the days when the judges judged," i. 1— suggest not only that those days are past, but that they are regarded as a definite period falling within an historical scheme. The book must be, at any rate, as late as David—for it describes Ruth as his

ancestress, iv. 17—and probably much later, as the implication is that it is a great thing to be the ancestress of David. The reverence of a later age for the great king shines through the simple genealogical notice with which the story concludes.[1] (4) Further, the old custom of throwing away the shoe as a symbol of the abandonment of one's claim to property, a custom familiar in the seventh century B.C. (Deut. xxv. 9f.) is in iv. 7 regarded as obsolete, belonging to the "former time." The cumulative effect of these indications is strongly to suggest a post-exilic date. Not perhaps, however, a very late one: a book as late as the Maccabean period would hardly have reflected so kindly a feeling towards the foreigner (cf. Esther).

The story probably rests upon a basis of fact. David's conduct in putting his parents under the protection of the king of Moab (1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4) would find its simplest explanation, if he had been connected in some way with Moab, as the book of Ruth represents him to have been; whereas a later age would hardly have dared to invent a Moabite ancestress for him, had there been no tradition to that effect.

The object of the book has been supposed by some to be to commend the so-called levirate marriage. This is improbable: not so much because the marriage was not strictly levirate, since neither Boaz nor the kinsman was the brother-in-law of Ruth—it would be fair enough to regard this as a legitimate extension of the principle of levirate marriage, whose

[1] Probably iv. 18–22 is a later addition, but that does not affect the general argument (cf. *v.* 17).

object was to perpetuate the dead man's name—but rather because this is a comparatively subordinate element in the story.

The true explanation is no doubt to be sought in the fact that Ruth the Moabitess is counted worthy to be an ancestress of David; and, if the book be post-exilic, its religious significance is at once apparent. It was in all probability the dignified answer of a man of prophetic instincts to the rigorous measures of Ezra, which demanded the divorce of all foreign women (Ezra ix. x, cf. Neh. xiii. 23ff.); for it can hardly be doubted that there is a delicate polemic in the repeated designation of Ruth as *the Moabitess*, i. 22, ii. 2, 6, 21, iv. 5, 10—she even calls herself the "stranger," ii. 10. It would be pleasant to think that the writer had himself married one of these foreign women. In any case, he champions their cause not only with generosity but with insight; for he knows that some of them have faith enough to adopt Israel's God as their God, i. 16, and that even a Moabitess may be an Israelite indeed. Ezra's severe legislation was inspired by the worthy desire to preserve Israel's religion from the peril of contagion: the author of Ruth gently teaches that the foreign woman is not an inevitable peril, she may be loyal to Israel and faithful to Israel's God. The writer dares to represent the Moabitess as eating with the Jews, ii. 14—winning by her ability, resource and affection, the regard of all, and counted by God worthy to be the mother of Israel's greatest king. The generous type of religion represented by the book of Ruth is a much needed and very attractive complement to the stern legalism of Ezra.

Lamentations

THE book familiarly known as the Lamentations consists of four elegies [1] (i., ii., iii., iv.) and a prayer (v.). The general theme of the elegies is the sorrow and desolation created by the destruction of Jerusalem [2] in 586 B.C.: the last poem (v.) is a prayer for deliverance from the long continued distress. The elegies are all alphabetic, and like most alphabetic poems (cf. Ps. cxix.) are marked by little continuity of thought. The first poem is a lament over Jerusalem, bereft, by the siege, of her glory and her sanctuary, i. 1–11, though the bitter and comfortless doom which she bewails in i. 12–22, is regarded as the divine penalty for her sin, i. 5, 8. Similarly in ii. 1–10 her sorrow and suffering are admitted to be a divine judgment. Her shame and distress are inconsolable, ii. 11–17, and she appeals to her God to look upon her in her agony, ii. 18–22. The third poem, probably the latest in the book, represents the city, after a bitter lament, iii. 1–21, as being inspired, by the thought

[1] In the Hebrew elegiac metre, as in the Greek and Latin, the second line is shorter than the first—usually three beats followed by two.

[2] An unconvincing attempt has been made to refer the last two chapters to the Maccabean age—about 170 B.C.

of the love of God, to submission and hope, iii. 22–36. A prayer of penitence and confession, iii. 37–54, is followed by a petition for vengeance upon the adversaries, iii. 55–66. The fourth poem, like the second, offers a very vivid picture of the sorrows and horrors of the siege : it laments, in detail, the fate of the people, iv. 1–6, the princes, iv. 7–11, the priests and the prophets, iv. 12–16, and the king, iv. 17–20, and ends with a prophecy of doom upon the Edomites, iv. 21, 22, who behaved so cruelly after the siege (Ps. cxxxvii. 7). In the last poem the city, after piteously lamenting her manifold sorrows, v. 1–18, beseeches the everlasting God for deliverance therefrom, v. 19–22.

A very old and by no means unreasonable tradition assigns the authorship of the book to Jeremiah. In the Greek version it is introduced by the words—which appear to go back to a Hebrew original—"And it came to pass, after Israel had been led captive and Jerusalem made desolate, that Jeremiah sat down weeping, and lifted up this lament over Jerusalem and said." This view of the authorship is as old as the Chronicler, who in 2 Chronicles xxxv. 25 seems to refer the book to Jeremiah, probably regarding iv. 20, which refers to Zedekiah, as an allusion to Josiah. Chs. ii. and iv. especially are so graphic that they must have been written by an eye-witness who had seen the temple desecrated and who had himself tasted the horrors of a siege, in which the mothers had eaten their own children for very hunger. The passionate love, too, for the people, which breathes through the elegies might well be Jeremiah's ; and the ascription of the

calamity to the sin of the people, i. 5, 8, is in the spirit of the prophet.

Nevertheless, it is not certain, or even very probable, that Jeremiah is the author. Unlike the Greek and the English Bible, the Hebrew Bible does not place the Lamentations immediately after Jeremiah but in the third division, among the *Writings*, so that there is really no initial presumption in favour of the Jeremianic authorship. Again, Jeremiah could hardly have said that " the prophets find no vision from Jehovah," ii. 8, nor described the vacillating Zedekiah as " the breath of our nostrils," iv. 20, nor attributed the national calamities to the sins of *the fathers*, v. 7 Other features in the situation presupposed by ch. v. appear to imply a time later than Jeremiah's, v. 18, 20, and it is very unlikely that one who was so sorely smitten as Jeremiah by the inconsolable sorrow of Jerusalem would have expressed his grief in alphabetic elegies : men do not write acrostics when their hearts are breaking. When we add to this that chs. ii. and iv. which stand nearest to the calamity appear to betray dependence on Ezekiel (ii. 14, iv. 20, Ezek. xxii. 28, xix, 24, etc.) there is little probability that the poems are by Jeremiah.

It is not even certain that they are all from the same hand, as, unless we transpose two verses, the alphabetic order of the first poem differs from that of the other three, and the number of elegiacs—three—in each verse of the first two poems, differs from the number—one—in the third, and two in the fourth. In the third poem each letter has three verses to itself ; in the other three poems, only one

Ch. iii. with its highly artificial structure and its tendency to sink into the gnomic style, iii. 26ff., is probably remotest of all from the calamity.[1] Considering the general hopelessness of the outlook, chs. ii. and iv. at any rate, which are apparently the earliest, were probably composed before the pardon of Jehoiachin in 561 B.C. (2 Kings xxv. 27) when new possibilities began to dawn for the exiles. 580–570 may be accepted as a probable date. The calamity is near enough to be powerfully felt, yet remote enough to be an object of poetic contemplation. The other poems are no doubt later: ch. v. may as well express the sorrow of the returned exiles as the sorrow of the exile itself. More than this we cannot say.

The older parts of the book, whether written in Egypt, Babylon, or more probably in Judah, are of great historic value, as offering minute and practically contemporary evidence for the siege of Jerusalem (cf. ii. 9–12) and as reflecting the hopelessness which followed it. Yet the hopelessness is by no means unrelieved. Besides the prayer to God who abideth for ever, v. 19, is the general teaching that good may be won from calamity, iii. 24–27, and, above all, the beautiful utterance that "the love of Jehovah never ceases [2] and His pity never fails," iii. 22.

[1] The intensely personal words at the beginning of ch. iii. are, no doubt, to be interpreted collectively. The "man who has seen affliction" is not Jeremiah, but the community. Cf. *v.* 14, "I am become the laughing stock of all nations" (emended text). Cf. also *v.* 45.

[2] Grammar and parallelism alike suggest the emendation on which the above translation rests.

Ecclesiastes

It is not surprising that the book of Ecclesiastes had a struggle to maintain its place in the canon, and it was probably only its reputed Solomonic authorship and the last two verses of the book that permanently secured its position at the synod of Jamnia in 90 A.D. The Jewish scholars of the first century A.D. were struck by the manner in which it contradicted itself: e.g., "I praised the dead more than the living," iv. 2, "A living dog is better than a dead lion," ix. 4; but they were still more distressed by the spirit of scepticism and "heresy" which pervaded the book (cf. xi. 9 with Num. xv. 39).

In spite of the opening verse, it is very plain that Solomon could not have been the author of the book. Not only in i. 12 is his reign represented as over—I *was* king—though Solomon was on the throne till his death, but in i. 16, ii. 7, 9, he is contrasted with all—apparently all the kings—that were before him in Jerusalem, though his own father was the founder of the dynasty. There is no probability that Solomon would have so scathingly assailed the administration of justice for which he himself was responsible, as is done in iii. 16, iv. 1, v. 8. The sigh in xii. 12 over the multiplicity of books is thoroughly inappropriate to the age of Solomon.

Indeed the whole manner in which the problem is attacked is inappropriate to so early a stage of literary and religious development. But it was by a singularly happy stroke that Solomon was chosen by a later thinker as the mouthpiece of his reflections on life; for Solomon, with his wealth, buildings, harem, magnificence, had had opportunity to test life at every point, and his exceptional wisdom would give unique value to his judgment.

Ecclesiastes is undoubtedly one of the latest books in the Old Testament. The criteria for determining the date are chiefly three. (1) *Linguistic.* Alike in its single words (e.g., preference for abstract nouns ending in *ûth*) its syntax (e.g., the almost entire absence of waw conversive) and its general linguistic character, the book illustrates the latest development of the Hebrew language. There are not a few words which occur elsewhere only in Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther: there are some pure Aramaic words, some words even which belong to the Hebrew of the Mishna. Even if we allow an early international use of Aramaic, the corrupt Hebrew of the book would alone compel us to place it very late. Some have sought to strengthen the argument for a late date from the presence of Greek influence on the *language* of the book, e.g., in such phrases as "under the sun," "to behold the sun," "the good which is also beautiful," v. 18; but, probable as it may be, it is not certain that there are Graecisms in the language of Ecclesiastes.[1]

(2) *Historical.* There is much interesting detail

[1] Cf. A. H. McNeile, *Introduction to Ecclesiastes*, p. 43.

which is clearly a transcript of the author's experience : the slaves he had seen on horseback, x. 7, the poor youth who became king, iv. 13–16 (cf. ix. 14ff.). These incidents, however, are too lightly touched, and we know too little of the history of the period, to be able to locate them definitely. The woe upon the land whose king is a child, x. 16, has been repeatedly connected with the time of Ptolemy V. Epiphanes (205–181 B.C.), the last of his house who ruled over Palestine and who at his father's death was little over four years old. However that may be, the general historical background is unmistakably that of the late post-exilic age. The book bears the stamp of an evil time, when injustice and oppression were the order of the day, iii. 16, iv. 1, v. 8, government was corrupt and disorderly and speech dangerous, x. 20. The allusions would suit the last years of the Persian empire (333) ; but if, as the linguistic evidence suggests, the book is later, it can hardly be placed before 250 B.C., as during the earlier years of the Greek period, Palestine was not unhappy.

(3) *Philosophical.* The speculative mood of the book marks it as late. Though not an abstract discussion—the Old Testament is never abstract—it is more abstract than the kindred discussion in the book of Job. It is hard to believe that Ecclesiastes was not affected by the Greek philosophical influences of the time. If it be not necessary to trace its contempt of the world to Stoicism, or its inculcation of the wise enjoyment of the passing moment directly to Epicureanism, at least an indirect influence can hardly be denied. Greek thought was spreading as the Greek language was ; and the scepticism of

Ecclesiastes, though not without parallels in earlier stages of Hebrew literature, yet here assumes a deliberate, sustained and all but philosophic form, which finds its most natural explanation in the profound and pervasive influence of Greek philosophy —an influence which could hardly be escaped by an age in which books had multiplied and study been prosecuted till it was a burden, xii. 12.

This "charming book," as Renan calls it, has in many ways more affinity with the modern mind than any other in the Old Testament. It is weary with the weight of an insoluble problem. With a cold-blooded frankness, which is not cynical, only because it is so earnest, it faces the stern facts of human life, without being able to bring to their interpretation the sublime inspirations of religion. More than once is the counsel given to fear God, but it is not offered as a *solution* of the riddle. The world is crooked, i. 15, vii. 13, and no change is possible, iii. 1–8. It is a weary round of contradictions, birth and death, peace and war, the former state annihilated by the latter; and by reason of the fixity of these contradictions and the certainty of that annihilation, all human effort is vain, iii. 9. It is all alike vanity—not only the meaner struggles for food and drink and pleasure (ii.) but even the nobler ambitions of the soul, such as its yearning for wisdom and knowledge. Whether we turn to the physical or the moral world it is all the same. There is no goal in nature (i.): history runs on and runs nowhere. All effort is swallowed up by death. Man is no better than a beast, iii. 19; beyond the grave there is nothing. Everywhere is disillusion-

ment, and woman is the bitterest of all, vii. 26. The moral order is turned upside down. Wrong is for ever on the throne. Providence, if there be such a thing, seems to be on the side of cruelty. Tears stand on many a face, but the mourners must remain uncomforted, iv. 1. The just perish and the wicked live long, vii. 15. The good fare as the bad ought to fare, and the bad as the good, viii. 14. Better be dead than live in such a world, iv. 2; nay, better never have been born at all, vi. 3. For all is vanity: that is the beginning of the matter, i. 2, it is no less the end, xii. 8. Over every effort and aspiration is wrung this fearful knell.

Sad conclusion anywhere, but especially sad for a Jew to reach! Indeed he contradicts some of the dearest and most fundamental tenets of the Jewish faith. Many a devout contemporary must have been horrified at the dictum that man had no pre-eminence above a beast, or that the world, which he had been taught to believe was very good (Gen. i. 31) was one great vanity. The preacher could not share the high hopes of a Messianic kingdom to come, of resurrection and immortality, which consoled and inspired many men of his day. To him life was nothing but dissatisfaction ending in annihilation. If this is not pessimism, what is?

But is this all? Not exactly. For "the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun," xi. 7. Over and over again the counsel is given to eat and drink and enjoy good, ii. 24; and despite the bitter criticism of woman already alluded to, a wife can make life more than tolerable, ix. 9. Nor does the book display the thorough-going re-

jection of religion which the previous sketch of it would have led us to expect. It is pessimistic, but not atheistic; nay, it believes not only in God but in a judgment, iii. 17, xi. 9*b*, though not necessarily in the hereafter. There is considerable extravagance in Cornill's remark that "never did Old Testament piety celebrate a greater triumph than in the book of Ecclesiastes"; but there is enough to show that the book is, after its own peculiar melancholy fashion, a religious book. It is significant, however, that the context of the word God, which only occurs some twenty times, is often very sombre. He it is who has "given travail to the sons of men to be exercised therewith," i. 13, iii. 10, cf. esp. iii. 18. Again, if the writer has any real belief in a day of judgment, why should he so persistently emphasize the resultlessness of life and deny the divine government of the world? "The fate of all is the same—just and unjust, pure and impure. As fares the good, so fares the sinner," ix. 2. This is a direct and deliberate challenge of the law of retribution in which the writer had been brought up. It may be urged, of course, that his belief in a divine judgment is a postulate of his faith which he retains, though he does not find it verified by experience. But such words—and there are many such—seem to carry us much farther. Here, then, is the essential problem of the book. Can it be regarded as a unity?

Almost every commentator laments the impossibility of presenting a continuous and systematic exposition of the argument in Ecclesiastes, or Qoheleth, as the book is called in the Hebrew Bible.

The truth is that, though the first three chapters are in the main coherent and continuous, little order or arrangement can be detected in the rest of the book. Various explanations have been offered. Bickell, e.g., supposed that the leaves had by some accident become disarranged—a supposition not wholly impossible, but highly improbable, especially when we consider that the Greek translation reads the book in the same order as the Hebrew text. Others suppose with equal improbability that the book is a sort of dialogue, in which each speaker maintains his own thesis, while the epilogue, xii. 13f., pronounces the final word on the discussion. One thing is certain, that various moods are represented in the book: the question is whether they are the moods of one man or of several. Baudissin thinks it not impossible that, "apart from smaller interpolations, the book as a whole is the reflection of the struggle of one and the same author towards a view of the world which he has not yet found."

Note the phrase "apart from interpolations." Even the most cautious and conservative scholars usually admit that the facts constrain them to believe in the presence of interpolations: e.g., xi. 9*b* and xii. 1*a* are almost universally regarded in this light. The difficulties occasioned by the book are chiefly three. (1) Its fragmentary character. Ch. x., e.g., looks more like a collection of proverbs than anything else. (2) Its abrupt transitions: e.g., vii. 19, 20. "Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten men that are in a city: *for* there is not a righteous man on the earth." This may be another aspect of (1). But (3) more serious and important

are the undoubted contradictions of the book, some of which had been noted by early Jewish scholars. E.g., there is nothing better than to eat and drink, ii. 24 ; it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting, vii. 2. In iii. 1–8 times are so fixed and determined that human labour is profitless, iii. 9, while in iii. 11 this inflexible order is not an oppressive but a beautiful thing. In viii. 14, ix. 2 (cf. vii. 15) the fate of the righteous and the wicked is the same, in viii. 12, 13, it is different : it is well with the one and ill with the other. In iii. 16, which is radically pessimistic (cf. *vv.* 18–21), there is no justice : in iii. 17 a judgment is coming. Better death than life, iv. 2, better life than death, ix. 4 (cf. xi. 7). In i. 17 the search for wisdom is a pursuit of the wind : in ii. 13 wisdom excels folly as light darkness. Ch. ii. 22 emphasizes the utter fruitlessness of labour, iii. 22 its joy. These contradictions are too explicit to be ignored. Indeed sometimes their juxtaposition forces them upon the most inattentive reader ; as when viii. 12, 13 assert that it is well with the righteous and ill with the wicked, whereas viii. 14 asserts that the wicked often fare as the just should fare and vice versa ; and that this is the author's real opinion is made certain by the occurrence of the melancholy refrain at the end of the verse.

Different minds will interpret these contradictions differently. Some will say they are nothing but the reflex of the contradictions the preacher found to run through life, others will say that they represent him in different moods. But they are too numerous, radical, and vital to be disposed of so

easily. There can be no doubt that the book is essentially pessimistic: it ends as well as begins with Vanity of Vanities, xii. 8; and this must therefore have been the ground-texture of the author's mind. Now it is not likely to be an accident that the references to the moral order and the certainty of divine judgment are not merely assertions: they can usually, in their context, only be regarded as protests—as protests, that is, against the context. That is very plain in ch. iii., where the order of the world, *vv.* 1–8, which the preacher lamented as profitless, *vv.* 9, 10, is maintained to be beautiful, *v.* 11. It is equally plain in iii. 17, which asserts the divine judgment, whereas the context, iii. 16, denies the justice of earthly tribunals, and effectually shuts out the hope of a brighter future by maintaining that man dies[1] like the beast, *vv.* 18–21.

Of a similar kind, but on a somewhat lower religious level are the frequent protests against the preacher's pessimistic assertions of the emptiness of life and the vanity of effort. For the injunction to eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of one's labour may, in their contexts, also be fairly considered not simply as statements, but as protests (cf. v. 18–20 with v. 13–17); for this glad love of life was thoroughly representative of the ancient tradition of Hebrew life (cf. Jeremiah's criticism of Josiah, xxii. 15.) Doubtless these protests could come from the preacher's own soul; but, considering all the phenomena, it is more natural to suppose that they

[1] Ch. iii. 21 should read: "Who knoweth the spirit of man, *whether* it goeth upward?" This translation involves no change in the consonantal text and is supported by the Septuagint.

were the protests of others who were offended by the scepticism and the pessimism of the book, which may well have had a wide circulation.

It now only remains to ask whether books regarded as Scripture ever received such treatment as is here assumed. Every one acquainted with the textual phenomena of the Old Testament knows that this was a common occurrence. The Greek-speaking Jews, translating about or before the time at which Ecclesiastes was written, altered the simple phrase in Exodus xxiv. 10, "They saw the God of Israel," to "They saw the place where the God of Israel stood." In Psalm lxxxiv. 11 they altered "God is a sun (or pinnacle ?) and shield" to "God loves mercy and truth." They altered "God" to "an angel" in Job xx. 15, "God will cast them (i.e., the riches) out of his belly"; or even to "an angel will cast them out of his house." These alterations have no other authority than the caprice of the translators, acting in the interests of a purer, austerer, but more timid theology. At the end of the Greek version of the book of Job, which adds, "It is written that Job will rise again with those whom the Lord doth raise," we see how deliberately an insertion could be made in theological interests. The liberties which the Greek-speaking Jews thus demonstrably took with the text of Scripture, we further know that the Hebrew-speaking Jews did not hesitate to take. A careful comparison of the text of such books as Samuel and Kings with Chronicles [1] shows that similar changes were de-

[1] Cf., e.g., the substitution of Satan in 1 Chron. xxi. 1 for Jehovah in 2 Sam. xxiv. 1.

liberately made, and made by pious men in theological interests. We are thus perfectly free to suppose that the original text of Ecclesiastes, which must have given great offence to the stricter Jews of the second century B.C., was worked over in the same way.

It would be impossible to apportion the various sections or verses of the book with absolute definiteness among various writers; in the nature of the case, such analyses will always be more or less tentative. But on the whole there can be little doubt that the original book, which can be best estimated by the more or less continuous section, i.–iii., was pervaded by a spirit of almost, if not altogether, unqualified pessimism. This received correction or rather protest from two quarters: from one writer of happier soul, who believed that the earth was Jehovah's (Ps. xxiv. 1) and, as such, was not a vanity, but was full of His goodness; and from a pious spirit, who was offended and alarmed by the preacher's dangerous challenge of the moral order, and took occasion to assure his readers of the certainty of a judgment and of the consequent wisdom of fearing God. On any view of the book it is difficult to see the relevance of the collection of proverbs in ch. x.

If this view be correct, the epilogue, xii. 9–14, can hardly have formed part of the original pessimistic book. The last two verses, in particular, are conceived in the spirit of the pious protest which finds frequent expression in the book; and it is easy to believe that the words saved the canonicity of Ecclesiastes, if indeed they were not added for that

very purpose. The reference to the commandments in *v.* 13 is abrupt, and almost without parallel, viii. 5. Again, the preacher, who speaks throughout the book in the first person, is spoken of here in the third, *v.* 9; and, as in no other part of the book, the reader is addressed as "my son" *v.* 12 (cf. Prov. i. 8., ii. 1, iii. 1).

The value of Ecclesisates is negative rather than positive. It is the nearest approach to despair possible upon the soil of Old Testament piety. It is the voice of a faith, if faith it can be called, which is not only perplexed with the search, but weary of it; but it shows how deep and sore was the need of a Redeemer.

Esther

THE spirit of the book of Esther is anything but attractive. It is never quoted or referred to by Jesus or His apostles, and it is a satisfaction to think that in very early times, and even among Jewish scholars, its right to a place in the canon was hotly contested. Its aggressive fanaticism and fierce hatred of all that lay outside of Judaism were felt by the finer spirits to be false to the more generous instincts that lay at the heart of the Hebrew religion; but by virtue of its very intensity and exclusiveness it was all the more welcome to average representatives of later Judaism, among whom it enjoyed an altogether unique popularity, attested by its three Targums and two distinct Greek recensions [1]—indeed, one rabbi places it on an equality with the law, and therefore above the prophets and the "writings."

The story is well told. The queen of Xerxes, king of Persia, is deposed for contumacy, and her crown is set upon the head of Esther, a lovely Jewish maiden. Presently the whole Jewish race is imperilled by an act of Mordecai, the foster-father

[1] It is probable also that the two decrees, one commanding the celebration for two days, ix. 20–28, the other enjoining fasting and lamentations, ix. 29–32, are later additions, designed to incorporate the practice of a later time.

of Esther, who refuses to do obeisance to Haman, a powerful and favourite courtier. Haman's plans for the destruction of the Jews are frustrated by Esther, acting on a suggestion of Mordecai. The courtier himself falls from power, and is finally hanged on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai, while Mordecai "the Jew" is exalted to the place next the king, and the Jews, whom the initial decree had doomed to extermination, turn the tables by slaying over 75,000 of their enemies throughout the empire, including the ten sons of Haman. In memory of the deliverance, the Purim festival is celebrated on the 14th and 15th of the month Adar.

The popularity of the book was due, no doubt, most of all to the power with which it expresses some of the most characteristic, if almost most odious, traits of Judaism; but also in a measure to its attractive literary qualities. The setting is brilliant, and the development of the incident is often skilful and dramatic. The elevation of Mordecai, due to the simple accident of the king's having passed a sleepless night, the unexpected accusation of Haman by Esther, the swift and complete reversal of the situation by which Haman is hanged upon his own gallows and Mordecai receives the royal ring—the general sequence of incidents is conceived and elaborated with considerable dramatic power.

The large number of proper names, the occasional reference to chronicles, ii. 23, vi. 1, and the precise mention of dates, combine to raise the presumption that the book is real history; but a glance at the

facts is sufficient to dispel this presumption. The story falls within the reign of Xerxes—about 483 B.C., but the hero Mordecai is represented as being one of the exiles deported with Jehoiachin in 597 B.C. This is a manifest impossibility. Equally impossible is it that a Jewish maiden can have become the queen of Persia, in the face of the express statement of Herodotus (iii. 84) that the king was bound to choose his consort from one of seven noble Persian families. These impossibilities are matched by numerous improbabilities. It is improbable, e.g., that Mordecai could have had such free intercourse with the harem, ii. 11, unless he had been a eunuch, or in the palace, ii. 19, unless he had been a royal official. It is improbable that Xerxes would have announced the date of the massacre months beforehand, improbable that he would later have sanctioned so indiscriminate a slaughter of his non-Jewish subjects, and most improbable of all that the Jews, who were in the minority, should have slain 75,000 of their enemies, who cannot be supposed to have been defenceless. It is much more likely that this wholesale butchery took place chiefly in the author's imagination, though doubtless the wish was father to the thought. Clearly he wrote long after the events he claims to be describing, and the sense of historical perspective is obscured where it is not lost. The Persian empire is a thing of the relatively distant past, i. 1, 13, and though the author is acquainted with Persian customs and official titles, it is significant that the customs have sometimes to be explained. The book is, in fact, not a history, but a historical novel in miniature.

Its date is hard to fix, but it must be very late, probably the latest in the Old Testament. In spite of its obvious attempt to reproduce the classic Hebrew style, the book contains Aramaisms, late Hebrew words and constructions, and the language alone stamps it as late. Still more decisive, however, is its sentiment. Its intensely national pride, its cruel and fanatical exclusiveness, can be best explained as the result of a fierce persecution followed by a brilliant triumph; and this condition is exactly met by the period which succeeded the Maccabean wars (135 B.C. or later). The book, with its Persian setting, may indeed have been written earlier in Persia; but it more probably represents a phase of the fierce Palestinian Judaism of the last half of the second century B.C. It has been suggested with much probability that Haman is modelled on Antiochus Epiphanes; between their murderous designs against the Jews there is certainly a strong resemblance, iii. 9, 1 Macc. i. 41, iii. 34–36.

The object of the book appears to have been twofold: to explain the origin of the Purim festival, and to glorify the Jewish people. The real explanation of the festival is shrouded in mystery. The book traces it to the triumph of the Jews over their enemies and connects it with *Pur*, ix. 26, supposed to mean "lot"; but no such Persian word has yet been discovered. Doubtless, however, the book is correct in assigning the origin of the festival to Persia. A festival with a somewhat dissimilar name —Farwardigân—was held in Persia in spring to commemorate the dead, and there may be just a hint of this in the fasting with which the festival

was preceded, ix. 31, cf. 1 Sam. xxxi. 13, 2 Sam. i. 12. The Babylonians had also held a new year festival in spring, at which the gods, under the presidency of Marduk, were supposed to draw the lots for the coming year: this may have been the ultimate origin of the "lot," which is repeatedly emphasized in the book of Esther, iii. 7, ix. 24, 26. In other words, the Jews adopted a Persian festival, which had already incorporated older Babylonian elements; for there can be little doubt that the ultimate ground-work of the book is Babylonian mythology. Esther is so similar to Istar, and Mordecai to Marduk, that their identity is hardly questionable; and in the overthrow of Haman by Mordecai it is hard not to see the reproduction of the overthrow of Hamman, the ancient god of the Elamites, the enemies of the Babylonians, by Marduk, god of the Babylonians. This supposition leaves certain elements unexplained—Vashti, e.g., is without Babylonian analogy, but it is too probable an explanation to be ignored; and it goes to illustrate the profound and lasting influence of Babylonia upon Israel. The similarity of the name Esther to Am*estr*is, who was Xerxes' queen (Hdt. vii. 114, ix. 112) may account for the story being set in the reign of Xerxes.

A collateral purpose of the book is the glorification of the Jews. In the dramatic contest between Haman the Agagite and Mordecai the Jew, the latter is victor. He refuses to bow before Haman, and Providence justifies his refusal; for the Jews are born to dominion, and all who oppose or oppress them must fall. Everywhere their superiority is

apparent: Esther the Jewess is fairer than Vashti, and Mordecai, like Joseph in the old days, takes his place beside the king.

What we regretfully miss in the book is a truly religious note. It is national to the core; but, for once in the Old Testament, nationality is not wedded to a worthy conception of God. Too much stress need not be laid on the absence of His name—this may have been due to the somewhat secular character of the festival with its giving and receiving of presents—and the presence of God, as the guardian of the fortunes of Israel, is presupposed throughout the whole story, notably in Mordecai's confident hope that enlargement and deliverance would arise to the Jews from one place, if not from another, iv. 14. But the religion of the book—for religion it is entitled to be called—is absolutely destitute of ethical elements. It is with a shudder that we read of Esther's request for a second butchery, ix. 13; and all the romantic glamour of the story cannot blind us to its religious emptiness and moral depravity. In a generation which had smarted under the persecution of Antiochus and shed its blood in defence of its liberty and ancestral traditions, such bitter fanaticism is not unintelligible. But the popularity of the book shows how little the prophetic elements in Israel's religion had touched the people's heart, and how stubborn a resistance was sure to be offered to the generous and emancipating word of Jesus.

Daniel

DANIEL is called a prophet in the New Testament (Matt. xxiv. 15). In the Hebrew Bible, however, the book called by his name appears not among the prophets, but among "the writings," between Esther and Ezra. The Greek version placed it between the major and the minor prophets, and this has determined its position in modern versions The book is both like and unlike the prophetic books. It is like them in its passionate belief in the overruling Providence of God and in the sure consummation of His kingdom; but in its peculiar symbolism, imagery, and pervading sense of mystery it stands without a parallel in the Old Testament. The impulse to the type of prophecy represented by Daniel was given by Ezekiel and Zechariah. The book is indeed rather apocalyptic than prophetic. The difference has been well characterized by Behrmann. "The essential distinction," he remarks, "between prophecy and apocalyptic lies in this: the prophets teach that the present is to be interpreted by the past and future, while the apocalyptic writers derive the future from the past and present, and make it an object of consolatory hope. With the prophets the future is the servant and even the continuation of the present; with the

apocalyptic writers the future is the brilliant counterpart of the sorrowful present, over which it is to lift them." This will be made most plain by a summary of the book itself.

Chs. i.–vi. are narrative in form; chs. vii.-xii. are prophetic or apocalyptic—they deal with visions. Curiously enough ii. 4–vii. 28, for no apparent reason, are written in Aramaic. In ch. i. Daniel and his three friends, Jewish captives at the court of Babylon, prove their fidelity to their religion by refusing to defile themselves with the king's food. At the end of three years they show themselves superior to the "wise" men of the empire. Then (ii.) follows a dream of Nebuchadrezzar, in which a great image was shivered to pieces by a little stone, which grew till it filled the whole world. Daniel alone could retell and interpret the dream: it denoted a succession of kingdoms, which would all be ultimately overthrown and succeeded by the everlasting kingdom of God. Ch. iii. deals not with Daniel but with his friends. It tells the story of their refusal to bow before Nebuchadrezzar's colossal image of gold, and how their fidelity was rewarded by a miraculous deliverance, when they were thrown into the furnace of fire. The supernatural wisdom of Daniel is again illustrated in ch. iv., where he interprets a curious dream of Nebuchadrezzar as a token that he would be humbled for a time and bereft of his reason. Ch. v. affords another illustration of the wisdom of Daniel, and of the humiliation of impiety and pride, this time in the person of Belshazzar, who is regarded as Nebuchadrezzar's son. Daniel interprets the enigmatic words written by the mysterious hand on

the wall as a prediction of the overthrow of Belshazzar's kingdom, which dramatically happens that very night. Ch. vi. is intended to teach how precious to God are those who trust Him and scrupulously conform to the practices of true religion without regard to consequences. Daniel is preserved in the den of lions into which he had been thrown by the cruel jealousy of the officials of Darius' empire.

With ch. vii. Daniel's visions begin. Four great beasts are seen coming up out of the sea, which, according to Babylonian mythology, is the element opposed to the divine. The last of the beasts, especially cruel and terrible, had ten horns, and among them a little horn with human eyes and presumptuous lips. Then is seen the divine Judge upon His throne, and the presumptuous beast is judged and slain. Before this same Judge is brought one like a son of man, who comes with the clouds of heaven—this human and heavenly figure being in striking contrast to the beasts that rise out of the sea. Daniel is informed that the beasts represent four kingdoms, whose dominion is to be superseded by the dominion of the saints of the most High, i.e. by the kingdom of God, which will be everlasting. In a second vision (viii.) a powerful ram is furiously attacked and overthrown by a goat. The angel Gabriel explains that the ram is the Medo-Persian empire, and the goat is the king of Greece, clearly Alexander the Great. From one of the four divisions of Alexander's empire, a cunning, impudent and impious king would arise who would abolish the daily sacrifice and lay the temple in ruins, but by a

miraculous visitation he would be destroyed. In ch. ix. Daniel, after a fervent penitential prayer offered in behalf of his sinful people, is enlightened by Gabriel as to the true meaning of Jeremiah's prophecy (xxv. 11. f., xxix. 10f.) touching the desolation of Jerusalem. The seventy years are not literal years, but weeks of years, i.e. 490 years. During the last week (i.e. seven years) there would be much sorrow and persecution, especially during the last half of that period, but it would end in the utter destruction of the oppressor.

In another vision (x.–xii.) Daniel is informed by a shining one of a struggle he had had, supported by Michael, with the tutelary angel of Persia ; and he makes a revelation of the future. The Persian empire will be followed by a Greek empire, which will be divided into four. In particular, alliances will be formed and wars made between the kings of the north (no doubt Syria) and the south (Egypt). With great elaboration and detail the fortunes of the king of the north, who is called contemptible, xi. 21, are described : how he desecrates the sanctuary, abolishes the sacrifice, cruelly persecutes the holy people, and prescribes idolatrous worship. At last, however, he too perishes, and his death is the signal that the Messianic days are very soon to dawn. Israel's dead—especially perhaps her martyred dead—are to rise to everlasting life, and her enemies are also to be raised to everlasting shame. Well is it for him who can possess his soul in patience, for the end is sure.

Two facts are obvious even to a cursory inspection

of the contents of Daniel (1), that certain statements about the exilic period, during which, according to the book, Daniel lived, are inaccurate; and (2) towards the close of the book and especially in ch. xi., which represents a period long subsequent to Daniel, the visions are crowded with minute detail which corresponds, point for point, with the history of the third and second centuries B.C., and in particular with the career of Antiochus Epiphanes (xi. 21–45).

(1) Among the unhistorical statements the following may be noted. There was no siege and capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar in 605 B.C., as is implied by i. 1 (cf. Jer. xxv. 1, 9–11), nor indeed could there have been any till after the decisive battle of Carchemish, which brought Western Asia under the power of Babylon. Again, Belshazzar is regarded as the son of Nebuchadrezzar (v.), though he was in reality the son of Nabunaid, between whom and Nebuchadrezzar three monarchs lay. Nor is there any room in this period of the history (538 B.C.) for "Darius the Mede," v. 31; the conquest of Babylon threw the Babylonian empire immediately into the hands of Cyrus, and the impossible figure of Darius the Mede appears to arise through a confusion with the Darius who recaptured Babylon after a revolt in 521, and perhaps to have been suggested by prophecies (cf. Isa. xiii. 17) that the Medes would conquer Babylon. Again, though in certain passages the Chaldeans represent the people of that name, v. 30, ix. 1, in others (cf. ii. 2, v. 7) the word is used to denote the wise men of Babylon—a use demonstrably much later than the

Babylonian empire and impossible to any contemporary of Daniel. Such a seven years' insanity of Nebuchadrezzar as is described in Daniel iv. is extremely improbable; equally improbable is the attitude that Nebuchadrezzar in his decree (iii.) and confession (iv.) and Darius in his decree (vi.) are represented as having adopted towards the God of the Jews.

(2) Concerning the immediately succeeding period —from Cyrus to Alexander—the author is apparently not well informed. He knows of only four Persian kings, xi. 2 (cf. vii. 6). Ch. xi. 5–20 gives a brief *résumé* of the relations between the kings of the north and the kings of the south—which, in this context, after a plain allusion in *vv.* 3, 4 to Alexander the Great and the divisions of his empire, can only be interpreted of Syria and Egypt. From *v.* 21, however, to the end of ch. xi. interest is concentrated upon one particular person, who must, in the context, be a king of the north, i.e. Syria. The direct reference in *v.* 31 to the pollution of the sanctuary, the temporary abolition of sacrifice, and the erection of a heathen altar, put it beyond all doubt that the impious and "contemptible" monarch is none other than Antiochus Epiphanes. This conclusion is confirmed by the details of the section, with their unmistakable references to his Egyptian campaigns, *vv.* 25–28, and to the check imposed upon him by the Romans, *v.* 30, in 168 B.C.

The phenomenon then with which we have to deal is this. A book supposed to come from the exile, and to announce beforehand the persecutions and ultimate triumph of the Jewish people in the second

century B.C. is occasionally inaccurate in dealing with the exilic and early post-exilic period, but minute and reliable as soon as it touches the later period. Only one conclusion is possible—that the book was written in the later period, not in the earlier. *It is a product of the period which it so minutely reflects*, 168–165 B.C. The precise date of the book depends upon whether we regard viii. 14 as implying that the dedication of the temple by Judas Maccabaeus in 165 B.C. is a thing of the past or still an object of contemplation. In any case it must have been written before the death of Antiochus in 164 (xi. 45). Like all the prophets, the author of Daniel addresses his own age. The brilliant Messianic days are always the issue of the existing or impending catastrophe; and so it is in Daniel. The redemption which is to involve the resurrection is to follow on the death of Antiochus and the cessation of the horrors of persecution—horrors of which the author knew only too well.[1]

Thus the belief in the late date of the book is reached by a study of the book itself, and is not due to any prejudice against the possibility of miracle or predictive prophecy. But the late date is confirmed by evidence of other kinds, especially (1) linguistic, and (2) theological. (1) There are over a dozen Persian words in the book, some even in the

[1] Daniel is fittingly chosen as the hero of the book and the recipient of the visions, as he appears to have enjoyed a reputation for piety and wisdom (Ezek. xiv. 14, 20, xxviii. 3). Ezekiel's references to him, however, would lead us to suppose that he is a figure belonging to the gray patriarchial times, rather than a younger contemporary of his own.

Babylonian part of the story. These words would place the book, at the earliest, within the period of the Persian empire (538–331 B.C.). Further, within two verses, iii. 4, 5, occur no less than five Greek words (herald, harp, trigon, psaltery and bagpipe), one of which, *psanterîn*, by its change of l (psa*l*terion) into n, betrays the influence of the Macedonian dialect and must therefore be later than the conquests of Alexander, and another, *symphonia*, is first found in Plato. Though it is not impossible that the names of the other musical instruments may have been taken over by the Semites from the Greeks at an early time, these words at any rate practically compel us to put the book, at the earliest, within the Greek period (i.e. after 331 B.C.). Further, the Hebrew of the book has a strongly Aramaic flavour. It is not classical Hebrew at all, but has marked affinities, both in vocabulary and syntax, with some of the latest books in the Old Testament, such as Chronicles and Esther.

(2) The theology of Daniel undoubtedly represents one of the latest developments within the Old Testament. The transcendence of God is emphasized. He is frequently called "the God of Heaven," ii. 18, 19, and once "heaven" is used, as in the later manner (cf. Luke xv. 18) almost as a synonym for "God," iv. 26. As God becomes more transcendent, angels become more prominent: they constitute a very striking feature in the book of Daniel—two of them are even named, Gabriel and Michael. Very singular, too, and undoubtedly late is the conception that the fortunes of each nation are represented and guarded in heaven by a tutelary angel, x. 13ff. 20.

The view of the future life in xii. 2, 3 is the most advanced in the Old Testament : not only the nation but the individuals shall be raised, and of the individuals not only the good (cf. Isa. xxvi. 14, 19) but the bad, to receive the destiny which is their due. These facts so conclusively suggest a late date for the book that it is unnecessary to emphasize Daniel's prayer three times a day with his face towards Jerusalem, vi. 10, though this is not without its significance.[1]

The interpretation of this difficult book loses much of its difficulty as soon as we recognize it to be a product of the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. It is best to begin with ch. xi., for there the allusions are, in the main, unmistakable and undeniable. Antiochus is the last of the kings of the north, i.e. Syria, regarded as one of the divisions of the Greek empire of Alexander the Great. Without enigma or symbolism of any kind, the Persian empire is mentioned in xi. 2 as preceding the Greek, and in *v.* 1 as being preceded by the Median, which in its turn had been preceded by the Babylonian. Here, then, in the plainest possible terms, is a succession of four empires—Babylonian, Median, Persian, Greek—the last to be succeeded by the kingdom of God (ch. xii.) ; and with this key in our hand we can unlock the secret of chs. vii. and ii.

In ch. vii. the four kingdoms, represented by the four beasts and contrasted with the humane kingdom

[1] It is worthy of notice that the reference to "the books" from which the prophecy of Jeremiah is quoted in ix. 2 seems to imply that the prophetic canon of Scripture was already closed, and this was hardly the case before 200 B.C.

which is to follow them, are no doubt these very same kingdoms, as are also the four kingdoms of ch. ii., symbolized by the different parts of the colossal image of Nebuchadrezzar's dream : the little stone which destroys the image is again the kingdom of God. In ch. viii. the ram with the two unequal horns is the Medo-Persian empire, and the goat which overthrows the ram is symbolic of the Greek empire, founded by Alexander.

These great features of the book are practically certain. It is further extremely probable that, in spite of a noticeable difference in the context, the " little horn " of viii. 9 is the same as the little horn of vii. 8, 20 : the detail of both descriptions—the war with the saints, the destruction of the temple, the abolition of the sacrifice—is an undisguised allusion to Antiochus Epiphanes in his persecution of the faithful Jews and his efforts to extirpate their religion. The one like a son of man in vii. 13 is almost certainly not the Messiah : coming as he does with the clouds of heaven, he is the symbol of the kingdom of God, in contrast to the beasts, which emerge from the ungodly sea and symbolize the empires of this world. Again, his being " like a man "—for this is probably all that the phrase means—is meant to suggest that the kingdom of God is essentially human and humane, in contrast to the four preceding kingdoms, which are essentially brutal and cruel. This interpretation, which the contrasts practically necessitate, is made as certain as may be by *vv.* 18, 22, 27, where the kingdom and dominion, which in *v.* 13 are assigned to one like a son of man, are assigned in similar terms to " the

people of the saints of the most High," i.e. the faithful Jews.

The passages whose interpretation is least certain occur in ch. ix. In each of two consecutive verses, *vv.* 25f., is a reference to an "anointed one" —a different person being intended in each case. The question of their identity involves the further question of the precise interpretation of the prophecy of the seventy weeks. In ix. 2 Daniel is reminded by a study of Jeremiah (xxv. 11f., xxix. 10) of the prophecy that the desolation of Jerusalem would last for seventy years. But it is not over yet.[1] Gabriel then explains, *v.* 24, that the years are in reality weeks of years, i.e. by the seventy years prophesied by Jeremiah are really meant 490 years. The period of seventy weeks, thus interpreted, is further subdivided in *vv.* 25, 26 (a passage almost unintelligible in the Authorized Version) into three periods, viz. seven weeks (= forty-nine years), sixty-two weeks, and one week (= seven years).

With the first and last periods there is no difficulty. Starting from 586 B.C., the date of the exile, forty-nine years would bring us to 537, just about the time assigned to the edict of Cyrus, which permitted the Jews to return and rebuild their city. Cyrus would thus be "the anointed, the prince," and it is an interesting corroboration of this view that Cyrus is actually called the anointed in Isaiah xlv. 1. Now, as the book ends with the anticipated death of Antiochus in 164 B.C., the last week would repre-

[1] Another incidental proof that the book is late. In the time presupposed by it for the activity of Daniel, the seventy years had not yet expired, and so there could have been no problem.

sent the years 171 to 164 ; and in 171 the high priest, who, as such, would naturally be an anointed one, was assassinated. Attention is specially called to the sorrows of the last half of the last week, when the sacrifice would be taken away. This corresponds almost exactly with the suspension of the temple services from 168 to 165 ; and this period, again, is that which is elsewhere characterized as "a time, and times, and half a time," i.e. three and a half years (vii. 25, xii. 7), or "2,300 evenings-mornings," i.e. 1,150 days (viii. 14) or 1,290 or 1,335 days (xii. 11, 12). These varying estimates of the period, not differing widely, probably suggest that the book was written at intervals, and not all at once. The beginning and the close of the seventy weeks or 490 years are thus satisfactorily explained ; but the period between 537 and 171 represents 366 instead of 434 years, as the sixty-two weeks demand. Probably the simplest explanation of the difficulty is that during much of this long period the Jews had no fixed method of computing time. Also it ought not to be forgotten that the numbers are, in any case, partly symbolical, and ought not to be too strictly pressed. For the purposes of the author, the first and last periods are more important than the middle.

The precise interpretation of the enigmatic writing on the wall (*mene*, *tekel*, *peres*, v. 28) is uncertain. It has been cleverly explained as equivalent to "a mina (=60 shekels), a shekel and a part" (i.e. about sixty-two) and regarded as a cryptogram for Darius, who, according to *v.* 31, was on the eve of destroying Belshazzar's kingdom. More probably it simply

means "number, weigh, divide"—the ambiguity being caused by the different possibilities of pointing and therefore of precisely interpreting these words, which were of course unpointed in the original. Further, in the word *peres* (divide), there is a veiled allusion to the Persians.

It is difficult to account for the fact that part of the book, ii. 4–vii., is written in Aramaic. It has been supposed that the author began to use that language in ii. 4, either because he regarded that as the language spoken by the wise men, or because they, being aliens, must not be represented as speaking in the sacred tongue; and that, having once begun to use it, and being equally familiar with both languages, he kept it up till he came to the more purely prophetic part of the book, in which he would naturally recur to the more appropriate Hebrew. Ch. vii., on this view, is difficult to account for, as it, no less than viii.–xii., is prophetic; and we should then have to assume, rather unnaturally, that the vision in ch. vii. was written in Aramaic because it so strongly resembled the dream of ch. ii. Besides it is not certain that the word "in Aramaic" in ii. 4 is meant to suggest that the wise men spoke in that language: it may have originally been only a marginal note to indicate that the Aramaic section begins here, just as vii. 28*a* may indicate the end of the section. Some have supposed that part of a book originally Hebrew was translated into the more popular Aramaic, or that part of a book originally Aramaic was translated into the sacred Hebrew tongue. The difficulty in either case is to account reasonably for

the presence of Aramaic in that particular section which does not coincide with either of the main divisions of the book (narrative or apocalyptic), but appears in both (i.–vi., vii.–xii.). Probably, as Peters has suggested, the Aramaic portion represents old and popular folk-stories about Daniel and his friends, that language being retained because in it the stories were familiarly told, while for the more prophetic or apocalyptic message the sacred language was naturally used. Ch. vii., however, presents a stumbling-block on any view of the Aramaic section. The Aramaic of the book is that spoken when the book was written : it was certainly not the language spoken by the Babylonian wise men. It is most improbable that they would have used Aramaic at all ; and if they had, it would not have been the dialect of the book of Daniel, which is a branch of western Aramaic, spoken in and around Palestine.

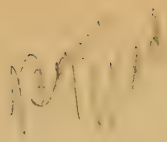
In spite of its somewhat legendary and apocalyptic form, the religious value of Daniel is very high. It is written at white heat amid the fires of persecution, and it is inspired by a passionate faith in God and in the triumph of His kingdom over the cruel and powerful kingdoms of the world. Its object was to sustain the tried and tempted faith of the loyal Jews under the fierce assaults made upon it by Antiochus Epiphanes. Never before had there been so awful a crisis in Jewish history. In 586 the temple had been destroyed, but that was practically only an incident in or the consequence of the destruction of the city ; but Antiochus had made a deliberate

attempt to exterminate the Jewish religion. It was to console and strengthen the faithful in this crisis that the book was written. The author reminds his readers that there is a God in heaven, and that He reigns, iv. 26. He bids them lift their eyes to the past and shows them how the fidelity of men like Daniel and his friends was rewarded by deliverance from the lions and the flames. He bids them lift their eyes to the future, the very near future: let them only be patient a little longer, xii. 12, and their enemies will be crushed, and the kingdom of God will come—that kingdom which shall know no end.

It is of especial interest that Antiochus died at the time when our author predicted he would, in 164 B.C., though not, as he had anticipated, in Palestine, xi. 45. In the kingdom that was so swiftly coming, the lives that had been lost on its behalf would be found again: the martyrs would rise to everlasting life. The narrative parts have an application to the times not much less immediate than the apocalyptic. The proud and mighty, like Nebuchadrezzar, are humbled: the impious, like Belshazzar, who drank wine out of the temple vessels, are slain. Any contemporary, reading these tales, would be bound to think of Antiochus, who had demolished the temple and suspended the sacrifices. So Daniel's refusal to partake of the king's food was well calculated to encourage men who had been put to the torture for declining to eat swine's flesh.

Man's extremity is God's opportunity. However cruel the sufferings or desperate the outlook, yet the Lord is mindful of His own, and He will Himself deliver them. For one of the most impressive

features of the book is its utter confidence in God and its refusal to appeal to the sword (Ps. cxlix. 6). It counsels to patience, xii. 12. Without human hands, God's kingdom comes, ii. 34, and His enemies are destroyed, viii. 25. In the most skilful way, the book reaches its splendid climax. It moves steadily on, from a distant past in which God's servants had been rewarded and His enemies crushed, down through the centuries in which successive empires were all unconsciously working out His predetermined plan, and on to the darkest days in history—so dark, because the glorious and everlasting kingdom of God was so soon to dawn.



Ezra-Nehemiah

Some of the most complicated problems in Hebrew history as well as in the literary criticism of the Old Testament gather about the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Apart from these books, all that we know of the origin and early history of Judaism is inferential. They are our only historical sources for that period; and if in them we have, as we seem to have, authentic memoirs, fragmentary though they be, written by the two men who, more than any other, gave permanent shape and direction to Judaism, then the importance and interest of these books is without parallel in the Old Testament, for nowhere else have we history written by a contemporary who shaped it.

It is just and practically necessary to treat the books of Ezra and Nehemiah together. Their contents overlap, much that was done by Ezra being recorded in the book of Nehemiah (viii.–x.). The books are regarded as one in the Jewish canon; the customary notes appended to each book, stating the number of verses, etc., are appended only to Nehemiah and cover both books; the Septuagint also regards them as one. There are serious gaps in the narrative, but the period they cover is at least a century (538–432 B.C.). A brief sketch of the books as they stand will suggest their great historical interest and also the historical problems they involve.

In accordance with a decree of Cyrus in 538 B.C. the exiled Jews return to Jerusalem to build the temple (Ezra i.). Then follows a list of those who returned, numbering 42,360 (ii.). An altar was erected, the feast of booths was celebrated, and the regular sacrificial system was resumed. Next year, amid joy and tears, the foundation of the temple was laid (iii.). The request of the Samaritans for permission to assist in the building of the temple was refused, with the result that they hampered the activity of the Jews continuously till 520 B.C. (iv. 1–5, 24). Similar opposition was also offered during the reigns of Xerxes and Artaxerxes, when the governor of Samaria formally accused the Jews before the Persian government of aiming at independence in their efforts to rebuild the city walls, and in consequence the king ordered the suspension of the building until further notice, iv. 6–23. Under the stimulus of the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah, the real work of building the temple was begun in 520 B.C. The enterprise roused the suspicion of the Persian governor, who promptly communicated with Darius. The Jews had appealed to the decree of Cyrus granting them permission to build, and this decree was found, after a search, at Ecbatana. Whereupon Darius gave the Jews substantial support, the buildings were finished and dedicated in 516 B.C., and a great passover feast was held (v., vi.).

The scene now shifts to a period at any rate fifty-eight years later (458 B.C.) Armed with a commission from Artaxerxes, Ezra the scribe, of priestly lineage, arrived, with a company of laity

and clergy, at Jerusalem from Babylon, with the object of investigating the religious condition of Judah and of teaching the law (vii.). Before leaving Babylon he had proclaimed a fast with public humiliation and prayer, and taken scrupulous precautions to have the offerings for the temple safely delivered at Jerusalem. When they reached the city, they offered a sumptuous burnt-offering and sin-offering (viii.). Soon complaints are lodged with Ezra that leading men have been guilty of intermarriage with heathen women, and he pours out his soul in a passionate prayer of confession (ix.). A penitent mood seizes the people; Ezra summons a general assembly, and establishes a commission of investigation, which, in about three months, convicted 113 men of intermarriage with foreign women (x.).

The history now moves forward about fourteen years (444 B.C.). Nehemiah, a royal cup-bearer in the Persian palace, hears with sorrow of the distress of his countrymen in Judea, and of the destruction of the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. i.). With the king's permission, and armed with his support, he visited Jerusalem, and kindled in the whole community there the desire to rebuild the walls (ii.). The work was prosecuted with vigour, and, with one exception, participated in by all (iii.). The foreign neighbours of Jerusalem, provoked by their success, meditated an attack—a plan which was, however, frustrated by the preparations of Nehemiah (iv.). Nehemiah, being interested in the social as well as the political condition of the community, unflinchingly rebuked the unbrotherly

treatment of the poor by the rich, appealing to his own very different conduct, and finally induced the nobles to restore to the poor their mortgaged property (v.). By cunning plots, the enemy repeatedly but unsuccessfully sought to secure the person of Nehemiah; and in fifty-two days the walls were finished (vi.). He then placed the city in charge of two officials, taking precautions to have it strongly guarded and more thickly peopled (vii.).

At a national assembly, Ezra read to the people from the book of the law, and they were moved to tears. They celebrated the feast of booths, and throughout the festival week the law was read daily (viii.). The people, led by the Levites (under Ezra, ix. 6, LXX.), made a humble confession of sin (ix.), and the prayer issued in a covenant to abstain from intermarriage with the heathen and trade on the Sabbath day, and to support the temple service (x.).

The population of the city was increased by a special draft, selected by lot from those resident outside, and also by a body of volunteers (xi.). After a series of lists of priestly and Levitical houses, one of which[1] is carried down to the time of Alexander the Great, xii. 1–26, the walls were formally dedicated, and steps were taken to secure the maintenance of the temple service and officers, xii. 27–47. On his return to Jerusalem in 432 B.C. Nehemiah enforced the sanctity of the temple, and instituted various reforms, affecting especially the Levitical dues, the sanctity of the Sabbath, and intermarriage with foreigners, xiii.

[1] According to Josephus, Jaddua (Neh. xii. 22) was high priest in the time of Alexander (about 330 B.C. ?).

The difficulties involved in this presentation of the history are of two kinds—inconsistencies with assured historical facts, and improbabilities. Perhaps the most important illustration of the former is to be found in Ezra iii. There not only is an altar immediately built by the returned exiles—a statement not in itself improbable—but the foundation of the temple is laid soon after, iii. 10, and the ceremony is elaborately described (536 B.C.). The foundation is also presupposed for this period elsewhere in the book (cf. v. 16, in an Aramaic document). Now this statement is at least formally contradicted by v. 2, where it is expressly said that, under the stimulus of the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah, who did not prophesy till 520 B.C., Zerubbabel and Joshua *began* to build the house of God. This is confirmed by the very explicit statements of these two prophets themselves, whose evidence, being contemporary, is unchallengeable. Haggai gives the very day of the foundation, ii. 18, and Zechariah iv. 9 says, "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house." It is not impossible to surmount the difficulty by assuming that the laying of the foundation in 536 B.C. was a purely formal ceremony while the real work was not begun till 520; still, it is awkward for this view that the language of two contemporary prophets is so explicit. And in any case, the statement in Ezra v. 16 that "since that time (i.e. 536) even until now (520) hath the temple been in building" is not easy to reconcile with what we know from contemporary sources; the whole brunt of Haggai's indictment is that the people have been attending to

their own houses and neglecting Jehovah's house, which is in consequence desolate (Hag. i. 4, 9).

The most signal illustration of the improbabilities that arise from the traditional order of the book lies in the priority of Ezra to Nehemiah. On the common view, Ezra arrives in Jerusalem in 458 B.C. (Ezra vii. 7, 8), Nehemiah in 444 (Neh. ii. 1). But the situation which Ezra finds on his arrival appears to presuppose a settled and orderly life, which was hardly possible until the city was fortified and the walls built by Nehemiah; indeed, Ezra, in his prayer, mentions the erection of the walls as a special exhibition of the divine love (Ezra ix. 9). Further, Nehemiah's memoirs make no allusion to the alleged measures of Ezra; and, if Ezra really preceded Nehemiah, it is difficult to see why none of the reformers who came with him from Babylon should be mentioned as supporting Nehemiah. Again, the measures of Nehemiah are mild in comparison with the radical measures of Ezra. Ezra, e.g. demands the divorce of the wives (Ezra x. 11ff.), whereas Nehemiah only forbids intermarriage between the children (Neh. xiii. 25). In short, the work of Nehemiah has all the appearance of being tentative and preliminary to the drastic reforms of Ezra. The history certainly gains in intelligibility if we assume the priority of Nehemiah, and the text does not absolutely bind us. Ezra's departure took place "in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king" (Ezra vii. 7). Even if we allow that the number is correct, it is just possible that the king referred to is not Artaxerxes I (465–424), but Artaxerxes II (404–359). In that case,

the date of Ezra's arrival would be 397 B.C.; in any case, the number of the year may be incorrect.

Any doubt which might arise as to the possibility of so serious a transformation is at once met by an indubitable case of misplacement in Ezra iv. 6–23. The writer is dealing with the alleged attempts of the Samaritans to frustrate the building of the temple between 536 and 520 B.C. (Ezra iv. 1–5), and he diverges without warning into an account of a similar opposition during the reigns of Xerxes (485–465) and Artaxerxes (465–424) (Ezra iv. 6–23), resuming his interrupted story of the building of the temple in ch. v. The account in iv. 6–23 is altogether irrelevant, as it has to do, not with the temple, but with the building of the *city* walls, iv. 12.

Such peculiarities and dislocations are strange in a historical writing, and they are to be explained by the fact that the book of Ezra-Nehemiah is not so much a connected history as a compilation. The sources and spirit of this compilation we shall now consider. First and of surpassing importance are (*a*, *b*) what are known as the I-sections—verbal extracts in the first person, from the memoirs of Erza and Nehemiah :—

(*a*) Ezra vii. 27–ix., except viii. 35, 36.

(*b*) Neh. i.–vii. 5, xii. 27–43, xiii. 4–31.

(*c*) Other sections, though they are not actually extracts from the memoirs, appear to rest directly on them: cf. Ezra vii. 1–10, x., Neh. viii.–x. In these sections Ezra is spoken of in the third person.

(*d*) Of great interest and importance are the Aramaic sections, Ezra iv. 7*b*–vi. 18 and vii. 12–26, involving correspondence with the Persian court or royal rescripts.

(*e*) Finally, there are occasional lists, such as Neh. xii. 1–26*a*, or Neh. vii. 6–69, a list of the returning exiles, incorporated in the memoirs of Nehemiah from some earlier list and borrowed in Ezra ii.

These are the chief sources, but there can be no doubt that they were compiled—that is put together and in certain cases worked over—by the Chronicler. That suspicion is at once raised by the fact that Ezra–Nehemiah is a strict continuation of the book of Chronicles,[1] though in the Hebrew Bible Chronicles appears last, because, having to compete with Samuel and Kings, it won its canonical position later than Ezra-Nehemiah. But apart from this, the phraseology, style and point of view of the Chronicler are very conspicuous. There is the same love of the law, the same interest in Leviticalism, the same joy in worship, the same fondness for lists and numbers. He must have lived a century or more after Ezra and Nehemiah; he looks back in Neh. xii. 47 to "the days of Nehemiah," and he must himself have belonged to the Greek period. One of his lists mentions a Jaddua, a high priest in the time of Alexander the Great. He speaks of the king of *Persia* (Ezra i. 1), and of Darius *the Persian*[2] (Neh. xii. 22), as one to whom the Persian empire was a thing of the past; contemporaries simply spoke of "the king," Ezra iv. 8.

Many of the peculiarities of the book are ex-

[1] Note that the opening verses of Ezra are repeated at the end of Chronicles to secure a favourable ending to the book—the more so as that was the last book of the Hebrew Bible.

[2] In Ezra vi. 22 Darius is even called the king of Assyria.

plained the moment it is seen to be a late compilation. The compiler selected from his available material whatever suited his purpose; he makes no attempt to give a continuous account of the period. He leaves without scruple a gap of sixty years or more [1] between Ezra vi. and vii. He interpolates a comment of his own in the middle of the original memoirs of Nehemiah.[2] He transcribes the same list twice (Ezra ii., Neh. vii.), which looks as if he had found it in two different documents. He gives passages irrelevant settings (cf. Ezra iv. 6–23). He passes without warning from the first person in Ezra ix. to the third person in Ezra x., showing that he does not regard himself as the slave, but as the master, of his material. Whatever may be thought of the view that he has reversed the chronological order of Ezra and Nehemiah, the book undoubtedly contains misplaced passages. Ezra x. is a very unsatisfactory conclusion to the account of Ezra, whereas Neh. viii.–x., which deal with the work of Ezra and its issue in a covenant, form an admirable sequel to Ezra x., and have almost certainly been misplaced.

We cannot be too grateful to him for giving intact the vivid and extremely important account of the activity of Nehemiah the layman in Nehemiah's own words (i.–vii. 5); at the same time, his own interests are almost entirely ecclesiastical. Unlike

[1] Unless we take into account the brief misplaced section in iv. 6–23.

[2] Cf. especially xii. 47 with its reference to "the days of Nehemiah," whereas in xii. 40, xiii. 6, etc., Nehemiah speaks in the first person. Ch. xii. 44–47 at least belongs to the Chronicler.

Ezra (viii. 15ff.), he says little of the homeward journey of the exiles in 537, but much of the temple vessels (Ezra i.) and of the arrangements for the sacrificial system, iii. 4–6. He dwells at length on the laying of the foundation stone of the temple, iii. 8–13, on the Samaritan opposition to the building, iv. 1–5, on the passover festival at the dedication of the temple when it was finished, vi. 19–22. He amplifies the Nehemiah narratives at the point where the services and officers of the temple are concerned.

The influence of the Chronicler is unmistakable even in the Aramaic documents, whose authenticity one would on first thoughts expect to be guaranteed by their language. Aramaic would be the natural language of correspondence between the Persian court and the western provinces of the empire, and these official documents in Aramaic one might assume to be originals; but an examination reveals some of the editorial terms that characterize the Hebrew. A decree of Darius is represented as ending with the prayer that "the God that hath caused His name to dwell there (i.e. at Jerusalem) may overthrow all kings and peoples that shall put forth their hand to destroy this house of God which is at Jerusalem" (Ezra vi. 13). To say nothing of the first clause, which has a suspicious resemblance to the language of Deuteronomy, such a wish addressed to the God of the Jews is anything but natural on the lips of a Persian. Again, there are several distinctively Jewish terms of expression in the rescript given by Artaxerxes to Ezra, e.g. the detailed allusion to sacrifices in Ezra vii. 17. This,

however, might easily be explained by assuming that Ezra himself had had a hand in drafting the rescript, which is not impossible.

The question, however, is for the historian a very serious one : how great were the liberties which the Chronicler allowed himself in the manipulation of his material ? It is interesting in this connexion to compare his account of the decree of Cyrus on behalf of the Jewish exiles in Ezra i. 2–4 with the Aramaic version in vi. 3–5, which has all the appearance of being original. The difference is striking. Cyrus speaks in ch. i. as an ardent Jehovah worshipper ; but the substance of the edict is approximately correct, though its form is altogether unhistorical and indeed impossible. The Chronicler's idealizing tendency is here very apparent ; and it is not impossible that this has elsewhere affected his presentation of the facts as well as the form of his narrative. In the light of the very plain statements of the contemporary prophets Haggai and Zechariah, we are justified in doubting whether, in Ezra iii., the Chronicler has not antedated the foundation of the temple. To him it may well have seemed inconceivable that the returned exiles should—whatever their excuse—have waited for sixteen years before beginning the work which to him was of transcendent importance.

It is possible, too, that prophecy may have influenced his presentation of the history. He throws into the very forefront a prophecy of Jeremiah (xxv. 12), and regards the decree of Cyrus as its fulfilment (Ezra i. 1). He may also have had in mind the words of the great exilic prophet who had

represented Cyrus as issuing the command to lay the foundation of the temple (Isa. xliv. 28); and he may in this way have thrown into the period immediately after the return activities which properly belong to the period sixteen years later. But it is perfectly gratuitous, on the strength of this, to doubt, as has recently been done, the whole story of the return in 537 B.C. Those who do so point out that the audience addressed by Haggai, i. 12, 14, ii. 2, and Zechariah viii. 6, is described as the remnant of the people of the land—that is, it is alleged, of those who had been left behind at the time of the captivity. No doubt the better-minded among these would lend their support to the efforts of Haggai and Zechariah to re-establish the worship, but this community as a whole must have been too dispirited and indifferent to have taken such a step without the impulse supplied by the returned exiles. The devotion of the native population to Jehovah, not great to begin with—for it was the worst of the people who were left behind—must have deteriorated through intermarriage with heathen neighbours (Neh. xiii., Ezra ix. x.); and without a return in 537 on the strength of the edict of Cyrus, the whole situation and sequel are unintelligible. The Chronicler's version of the decree of Cyrus throws a flood of light upon his method. It cannot be fairly said that he invents facts; he may modify, amplify and transpose, but always on the basis of fact. His fidelity in transcribing the memoirs of Nehemiah is proof that he was not unscrupulous in the treatment of his sources.

It remains to consider briefly the value of these

sources. The authenticity of the memoirs of Nehemiah is universally admitted. Similar phrases are continually recurring, e.g. "the good hand of my God upon me," ii. 8, 18, and the whole narrative is stamped with the impress of a brave, devout, patriotic and resourceful personality. The authenticity of the memoirs of Ezra has been disputed with perhaps a shadow of plausibility. The language of the memoirs distinctly approximates to the language of the Chronicler himself, though this can be fairly accounted for, either by supposing that the spirit and interests of Erza the priest were largely identical with those of the Chronicler, or that the Chronicler, recognizing his general affinity with Ezra, hesitated less than in the case of Nehemiah to conform the language of the memoirs to his own. But more serious charges have been made. It has been alleged that the account of the career of Ezra has been largely modelled on that of Nehemiah, as that of Elisha on Elijah, and that legendary elements are traceable, e.g. in the immense wealth brought by Ezra's company from Babylon (Ezra viii. 24–27). These reasons do not seem altogether convincing. The Chronicler stood relatively near to Ezra. Records and lists were kept in that period, and he was no doubt in possession of more first-hand documentary information than appears in his book. There is no obvious motive for the writer who so faithfully transcribed the memoirs of Nehemiah, inventing so vivid, coherent and circumstantial a narrative for Ezra in the first person singular (Ezra vii. 27–ix.).

The question of the Ezra memoirs raises the

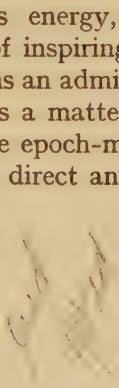
further question of the Aramaic documents. The memoirs are immediately preceded by the Aramaic rescript of Artaxerxes permitting Ezra to visit Jerusalem for the purpose of reorganizing the Jewish community (Ezra vii. 12–26). Doubt has been cast upon the authenticity of this document on the strength of its undeniably Jewish colouring; but this, as we have seen, is probably to be explained by the not unnatural assumption that Ezra himself had a hand in its preparation. Its substantial authenticity seems fully guaranteed by the spontaneous and warm-hearted outburst of gratitude to God with which Ezra immediately follows it (Ezra vii. 27ff): "Blessed be Jehovah, the God of our fathers, who hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart," etc. A similar criticism may be made in general on the Aramaic document, Ezra iv. 7*b*–vi. 18. It is certain, as we have seen, that the document has been retouched by the Chronicler; but the whole passage and especially the royal decrees are substantially authentic. Attention has been called to the Persian words which they contain, though this alone is not decisive, as they might conceivably be due to a later author; but the authenticity of the decree of Cyrus is practically guaranteed by the story that it was discovered at Ecbatana (Ezra vi. 2). Had it been a fiction, the scene of the discovery would no doubt have been Babylon or Susa.

After making allowance, then, for the Chronicler's occasionally cavalier treatment of his sources, we have to admit that the sources themselves are of the highest historical value, though in order to secure

a coherent view of the period, they have, in all probability, to be rearranged. No rearrangement can be considered as absolutely certain, but the following, which is adopted by several scholars, has internal probability :—

Ezra i.–iv. 5, iv. 24–vi., followed by about seventy years of silence (516–444 B.C.). Neh. i.–vi., Ezra iv. 6–23, Neh. vii.1–69 (=Ezra ii.), Neh. xi., xii., xiii. 4–31, Ezra vii., viii., Neh. vii. 70–viii., Ezra ix.–x. 9, Neh. xiii. 1–3, Ezra x. 10–44, Neh. ix., x.

Despite their enormous difficulties, Ezra-Nehemiah are a source of the highest importance for the political and religious history of early Judaism. The human interest of the story is also great—the problems for religion created by intermarriage (Neh. xiii. 23ff., Ezra ix., x.), and the growth of the commercial spirit (Neh. xiii. 15–22). The figure of Ezra, though not without a certain devout energy, is somewhat stiff and formal; but the personality revealed by the memoirs of Nehemiah is gracious almost to the point of romance. Seldom did the Hebrew people produce so attractive and versatile a figure—at once a man of prayer and of action, of clear swift purpose, daring initiative, and resistless energy, and endowed with a singular power of inspiring others with his own enthusiasm. He forms an admirable foil to Ezra the ecclesiastic; and it is a matter of supreme satisfaction that we have the epoch-making events in his career told in his own direct and vigorous words.



Chronicles

THE comparative indifference with which Chronicles is regarded in modern times by all but professional scholars seems to have been shared by the ancient Jewish church. Though written by the same hand as wrote Ezra-Nehemiah, and forming, together with these books, a continuous history of Judah, it is placed after them in the Hebrew Bible, of which it forms the concluding book; and this no doubt points to the fact that it attained canonical distinction later than they. Nor is this unnatural. The book of Kings had brought the history down to the exile of Judah; and the natural desire to see the history carried from its new starting point in the return and restoration through post-exilic times is met by the book of Ezra-Nehemiah, to which there was no rival, whereas Chronicles had a rival in the existing and popular books of Samuel and Kings.

The book, whose name *Chronicles* is borrowed by Luther from Jerome, is very late. Ezra-Nehemiah with which Chronicles goes must be, as we have seen,[1] as late as Alexander the Great; but the lateness of Chronicles can be proved without going beyond the book itself. The Hebrew text of

[1] See p. 355.

1 Chron. iii. 19ff. carries the date six generations beyond Zerubbabel (520 B.C.), that is, at the earliest, to 350 B.C., while the Greek text postulates eleven generations, which would compel us to come as late as 250 B.C. We shall not go far astray if we consider the date as roughly 300 B.C. It is thus seven centuries later than the reign of David, with whose ecclesiastical enterprises it deals so elaborately, and about two and a-half centuries from the exile, with which it closes. The distance of the record from the events has to be borne in mind when estimating its religious spirit and historical value.

The book of Chronicles is an ecclesiastical history in a sense very much more severe than the book of Kings; on every page it reflects the ritual interests which were predominant when the book was written. To it the only history worth recording is the history of Judah. The first ten chapters are occupied with the preparation for that history, and the rest of the book (1 Chron. xi.–2 Chron. xxxvi.) with the history itself from the coronation of David to the exile. Israel is the apostate kingdom; she had revolted alike from Judah and Jehovah, and had been swept for her sins into exile, from which she never emerged again. The Chronicler makes a man of God say to Amaziah, "Jehovah is not with Israel," 2 Chron. xxv. 7, and this exactly represents his own attitude. He therefore all but absolutely ignores the history of the northern kingdom, touching upon it only where it is in some special way implicated in the history of Judah.

This practically exclusive attention of the Chronicles to Judah is based upon her unique re-

ligious or rather ecclesiastical importance. In Judah God made Himself known as nowhere else (cf. Ps. lxxvi. 1, 2); she was the religious metropolis of the world (Ps. lxxxvii.); Jerusalem was the capital of Judah, and the temple was the centre of Jerusalem. Therefore the temple and its affairs completely dwarf all other interests. Not only is the story in Kings of its building and dedication by Solomon repeated and expanded (2 Chron. i.–ix.), but the story of David's reign (1 Chron. xi.–xxix.) is almost entirely monopolized by an account of the arrangements which he made for the temple ordinances and the material which he collected for the building. He is said to have given Solomon a plan of the temple with all its furniture and sundry other details, the pattern of which he is said to have himself received from the hand of God (xxviii). Every opportunity is taken in the course of the history to dwell with an affectionate elaboration of detail on the temple services or festivals; and the resultant contrast between the corresponding accounts of the same reign in Kings and Chronicles is often very singular—nowhere more so than in the story of Hezekiah, most of which is devoted to an account of the great passover held in connexion with the reformation (2 Chron. xxix., xxx.).

The Chronicler betrays, if possible, even more interest in the Levites than in the priests. It is a Levite who is moved by the Spirit to encourage Jehoshaphat before the battle (2 Chron. xx. 14), and special attention is called to their enthusiasm at the reformation of Hezekiah (2 Chron. xxix. 34). The Chronicler also displays exceptional interest in

the musical service—in his account, e.g., of the inauguration of the temple and of the passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah ; so that it has been not unreasonably conjectured that the author was himself a Levite and a member of one of the guilds of temple singers or musicians.

Since, then, the interests of the Chronicler are so undeniably ecclesiastical, the question may be fairly raised how far his narrative is strictly historical. It must be confessed, e.g., that the impression made by his account of David is distinctly unnatural and improbable, in the light of the graphic biography in 1 and 2 Samuel. It is not a supplementary picture, but an altogether different one. The versatile minstrel-warrior of the earlier books is transformed into a saint, whose supreme aim in life is the service of religion ; and this transformation is thoroughly characteristic of the Chronicler. He deals with his literary sources in the most sovereign fashion, and adapts them to his theories of Providence. His omissions, e.g., are very significant. He has nothing to say of David's adultery, nor of Solomon's idolatry, nor of the intrigues by which he succeeded to the throne, nor of the tribute of silver and gold which Hezekiah paid Sennaccherib (2 Kings xviii. 14–16). It may be urged in extenuation of his silence that his public were already familiar with these stories in the books of Samuel and Kings ; but he repeats so many sections from these books word for word that his failure to repeat the sections which militate against his heroes can only be regarded as part of a deliberate policy. Especially must this be maintained in the

light of his numerous modifications or contradictions of his sources. David's sons, he tells us, were chief about the king (1 Chron. xviii. 17); he cannot allow that they were priests, as 2 Sam. viii. 18 says they were. Nor can he allow that Solomon offered his dedicatory prayer before the altar (1 Kings viii. 22)—that was the place for the priest—so he erects for him a special platform in the midst of the court, from which he addresses the people (2 Chron. vi. 13).

The motive of these changes is obviously respect for the priestly law. Sometimes the motive is to glorify his heroes or to magnify their enthusiasm or devotion. Where, e.g. in 2 Sam. xxiv. 24 David pays Araunah fifty shekels of silver for the ground on which the temple was afterwards built, in 1 Chron. xxi. 25 he pays 600 shekels of gold. Similarly, in 1 Kings ix. 11 Solomon gives Hiram certain cities in return for a loan; in 2 Chron. viii. 2 it is Hiram who gives Solomon the cities. David accumulates 100,000 talents of gold and 1,000,000 of silver for the building of the temple (1 Chron. xxii.)—a fabulous and impossible sum when we remember that Solomon himself had only 666 talents of gold yearly (1 Kings x. 14). In 2 Sam. xxi. 19 Elhanan is the hero who slays Goliath; the Chronicler sees that this conflicts with the romantic story of David (1 Sam. xvii.) and threfore makes Elhanan slay the brother of Goliath (1 Chron. xx. 5). In 2 Kings xxii., xxiii., the reformation of Josiah follows very naturally upon the finding of the law in the eighteenth year of the king, but the Chronicler represents the reformation as taking place in his twelfth year,

i.e. as soon as he came of age (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3). He still, however, dates the finding of the law in his eighteenth year (cf. 8), i.e. *six years after the reformation*, and thus throws the history into an impossible sequence, apparently for no other object than to illustrate the youthful devotion of his hero-king. He is not even always consistent with himself; following Kings (1 Kings xv. 14, xxii. 43) he says that Asa and Jehoshaphat did not remove the high places (2 Chron. xv. 17, xx. 33), and yet he had just before told us that they did (2 Chron, xiv. 5, xvii. 6) as, on his theory, being good kings, they should. The motive for the change is usually obvious. In 2 Sam. xxiv. 1 Jehovah had tempted David to number the people. This is intolerable to the more advanced theology of the Chronicler, so he ascribes the impulse to Satan (1 Chron. xxi. 1). A similar transformation may be seen in his notice of the doom of Saul. In 1 Sam. xxviii. 6 it is implicitly said that Saul earnestly sought to discover the divine will; in 1 Chron. x. 14 this is roundly denied—he did not inquire of Jehovah.

These and similar transformations, amounting sometimes to contradictions of the original sources, are due to a religious motive, and they appear to be made in perfectly good faith. The Chronicler is a religious man who, unlike Job, finds no perplexities in the moral world, but everywhere a precise and mechanical correspondence between character and destiny. Not only is piety rewarded by prosperity, but prosperity presupposes piety. The most pious kings have the most soldiers. David has over a million and a half, Jehoshaphat over a

million, while Rehoboam has only 180,000. Manasseh's long reign of fifty-five years—a stumbling-block, on the Chronicler's theory—has to be explained by his repentance (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11ff.). Religious explanations are everywhere assigned for facts. Josiah's defeat and death are the penalty of his disobedience to the word of God which came to him through the Egyptian king (2 Chron. xxxv. 21ff.). So Uzziah's leprosy is the divine punishment of his pride in presuming to offer incense despite the protests of the priests (2 Chron. xxvi. 16ff.). The Chronicler sees the hand of God in everything; He is the immediate arbiter of all human destiny. That is why rewards and punishments are so swift and just and sure. The divine control of human affairs is most conspicuously seen in the Chronicler's account of battles, where the human warriors count for nothing. God fights or causes a panic among the enemy; the warriors do little more than shout and pursue (2 Chron. xiii. 15, xx.). The battle-scenes show how little imagination the Chronicler possessed; clearly he had never seen a battle, and he has no conception of one (cf. Num. xxxi.). He thinks nothing of describing a conflict between 400,000 Judeans and 800,000 Israelites, in which half a million of the latter were slain (2 Chron. xiii.). It is all so different from the stirring and life-like tales of the Judges or the Maccabees.

In the face of these historical improbabilities, what are we to make of the Chronicler's continual appeal to his sources? These are ostensibly of two kinds: (*a*) historical, (*b*) prophetical. (*a*) He fre-

quently refers to the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, the book of the kings of Judah and Israel, the book of the kings of Israel, and the history of the kings of Israel. No doubt one book is cited under these different titles. The history of Manasseh, e.g., is said to be recorded in the history of the kings of Israel (2 Chron. xxxiii. 18); clearly this cannot be northern Israel, as Manasseh was a king of Judah. What, then, was this book of the kings of Israel and Judah? At first we are strongly tempted to regard it as our canonical book of Kings. That book was already over two centuries in existence and must have been familiar; not only are whole sections copied from it by the Chronicler verbatim, but occasionally passages which he adopts presuppose other passages which he has omitted; e.g. he follows 2 Sam. v. 13 in asserting that David took *more* wives (1 Chron. xiv. 3), though the word "more" has no meaning in his context; in his source it points naturally enough back to 2 Sam. iii. 2–5. There can be no doubt, then, that the canonical books of Samuel and Kings constituted one of his sources.

Yet it is almost equally certain that that is not the book to which he continually refers his readers. The "book of Jehu," which recorded the history of Jehoshaphat, is said to be incorporated in the book of the Kings of Israel (2 Chron. xx. 34); it is not, however, in our canonical Kings. Neither is the prayer of Manasseh (2 Chron. xxxiii. 18), nor are the genealogies referred to in 1 Chron. ix. 1. Again, for further information about Jotham the reader is referred to the book of the kings of Israel and Judah

(2 Chron. xxvii. 7), when, as a matter of fact, the Chronicler has more to tell about him than our book of Kings (2 Kings xv. 32–38). Clearly, then, the book so frequently cited is not the canonical book of Kings. What sort of production it was may be inferred from the reference in 2 Chron. xxiv. 27 to the "*midrash* of the book of the Kings." Doubtless the book in question was a midrash, i.e. an edifying commentary on the history, of the sort preserved in the very late story of 1 Kings xiii. The tendency towards midrash, which so powerfully affected the later Jewish mind, appears as early as the stories of Elisha.

(*b*) Prophetic sources are also frequently cited or alluded to, e.g. the books of Samuel, Nathan, Gad (1 Chron. xxix. 29), the prophecy of Ahijah, the book of Shemaiah, the book of Iddo (2 Chron, xii. 15), the vision of Isaiah (2 Chron. xxxii. 32), etc. Probably, however, these were not independent prophetic works. The reference to the "*midrash* of the prophet Iddo" (2 Chron. xiii. 22) suggests that these works, like the history of the kings, were midrashic; in all probability they were simply extracts from the midrashic book of Kings already alluded to. Practically all the prophets to whom books are ascribed in Chronicles are mentioned in the canonical books, and probably they were regarded as the authors of the sections in which their names occur, so that the books of Samuel, Nathan and Gad would be none other than the relevant portions of Samuel and Kings, or of the midrash of these books. Thus the Chronicler's imposing array of citations may be without injustice reduced to

two books—the canonical book of Kings (or Genesis to Kings) and the midrash to those books.

These facts have led many to deny all value whatever to the Chronicler's unsupported statements. But such a condemnation is too sweeping. The genealogies in 1 Chron. i.–ix., though they no doubt received many later additions, probably rest on good sources, and there are other notices bearing, e.g., on the fortifications of Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi.), Jotham (2 Chron. xxvii.), etc., on Uzziah's enterprise in peace and war (2 Chron. xxvi. 5–15), on Judah's border warfare (2 Chron. xvii. 11, xxi. 16, xxvi. 7, xxviii. 17f.), etc., which do not display the Chronicler's characteristic tendencies and appear to be authentic. On the whole, however, the historical value of Chronicles must be rated low. Nor is its religious value high. Its attitude to the problems raised by the moral order is exceedingly mechanical, and with one noble exception (2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19), its general conception of religion is ritualistic. But it is a valuable monument of the Judaism of the third century B.C., and we learn from it to appreciate the daring independence of such books as Job and Ecclesiastes.

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